

**CITY OF DECATUR, ILLINOIS**

***FIVE YEAR CONSOLIDATED PLAN***

***FY2010 - 2014***



**PREPARED BY:**

**THE CITY OF DECATUR  
NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

March 10, 2010

# **CITY OF DECATUR, ILLINOIS**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Decatur, Illinois is an entitlement community which receives an annual allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD). The overall goal of CPD is **to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities principally for low- and moderate-income persons. The primary means towards this end is to extend and strengthen partnerships among all levels of government and the private sector, including for-profit and non-profit organizations, in the production and operation of affordable housing.** In order to receive funding from CPD, local governments are required to submit a **Five-Year Consolidated Plan**. This document must state the jurisdiction's plan to pursue these goals for its community planning and development programs, as well as for housing programs. It is these goals against which the plan and the jurisdiction's performance under the plan will be evaluated by HUD.

In accordance with the HUD's guidelines, the Department of Neighborhood Services has developed a **Five-Year Consolidated Plan for 2010-2014 (Con Plan)**. The Con Plan analyzes the Decatur's current housing and non-housing community development situation and needs, identifies resources available to meet the needs, and sets a unified vision and long-term strategies and short-term action steps to address priority unmet needs. It can, and is, used as a resource in securing other grants by the City and other local governmental units and public agencies. It also provides a basis for CDBG and HOME resource allocations for the next five years in meeting the City's goals and addressing those needs.

**Section I** of the Con Plan describes the process used in its development including the purpose, the lead agency, and community partners. It also includes Decatur's **Citizen Participation Plan** which, as required, provides for and encourages citizens to participate in the development of the consolidated plan, any substantial amendments to the consolidated plan, and the performance report. In developing the Con Plan, the City engaged citizens through public workshops and community meetings, a citizen survey, a public hearing, and announcements in the media and on the website. Consultations were held with representatives of numerous agencies and other community partners.

**Section II** discusses Decatur's **housing** conditions and needs. It presents a demographic snapshot and then reviews the current housing supply and market conditions. It then analyzes the housing needs according to various population groups and categories. From the housing market analysis, consultation with professionals, and responses received from citizens, a summary of all identified housing needs was compiled. Not all of these housing needs were determined to be a priority for the City during the next five years, as they may be currently addressed, or planned to

be addressed in the near future, by other resources, are beyond the scope of the City's available resources, or are not feasible to address at this time for other reasons.

**Section III** addresses **homelessness** in Decatur. This section includes a discussion of the nature and extent of homelessness in the community and existing facilities and services. It then assesses the needs by various sub-population of the homeless community. Using this information, a strategic plan to address homelessness is presented. The City of Decatur is an integral part of the Decatur/Macon County Council Homeless Council Continuum of Care and of the Working Group on Chronic Homelessness. The City's incorporates three aspects: the objectives of the Decatur/Macon County Continuum of Care, the recommendations presented in the Ten Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness, and specific City objectives regarding prevention, outreach and assessment, emergency shelters and services, transitional housing, transition to permanent housing, chronic homelessness, and supportive services.

Along with housing and homelessness, the Consolidated Plan must include a strategy to address Decatur's priority unmet **non-housing community development needs**. **Section IV** identifies these needs and the rationale for the priority they were assigned. These ratings are listed on **Table 2B** and in narrative form for those receiving a "High" or "Medium" rating. Over the next five years, the City anticipates addressing priority unmet non-housing community development needs through collaboration with other organizations, and in some cases through use of a portion of its annual CDBG allocation. Those needs which are anticipated to be addressed using federal funding are included in the Strategic Plan.

**Section V** is the City's Five-year **Strategic Plan**. Based on the identified housing and homeless needs, housing market analysis and non-housing community development needs, **Priority Needs** were determined and presented in **Table 2A** (unmet housing needs) and **Table 2B** (unmet non-housing community development needs). This Section presents specific objectives to address the priority unmet needs. Objectives are stated in **Transition Table 2C, Summary of Specific Housing/Community Development Objectives**, under the categories of Rental Housing (RH), Owner Housing (OH), Homelessness (HL), Special Needs (SN), Community Development (CD), Infrastructure (I), Public Facilities (PF), Public Services (PS), Economic Development (ED), and Neighborhood Revitalization (NR). The Strategic Plan describes the specific objectives and actions that are planned to be taken using federal funds during the next five years in each required plan area (affordable housing, homelessness, special needs housing, and non-housing community development), including a rationale for the funding decision, the source of funds, performance measure, and measurable outcome. These objectives are included at the end of this Executive Summary. Highlights include:

- *Funding a tenant counseling program to assist low-income renters in securing and maintaining decent, affordable rental housing.*

- Continuing to assist low-income renters to sustain housing and prevent homelessness through the federal **Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (HPRP)**.
- Improving existing housing conditions for low-income homeowners through a variety of **housing rehabilitation programs** which enhance living conditions, allow the elderly and persons with physical disabilities to continue living independently; improve energy efficiency, and improve the housing stock and living environment in the city's older neighborhoods. With the completion of Wabash Crossing and other new affordable and supportive housing projects, the focus of resource allocation has shifted from new construction to rehabilitation of the existing housing stock, specifically within urban core neighborhoods.
- Provide financial assistance to low-income **first-time homebuyers**.
- Continuing and supporting the **Neighborhood Inspections Program**, which includes the enforcement of housing regulations and legal action against landlords and home owners who are not in compliance, and demolition of abandoned, unsafe and substandard structures. This improves the quality of the housing stock, provides better housing conditions for the City's low-income residents, and improves the safety and quality of older, inner-city neighborhoods.
- Collaborating with vocational, business, and other organizations to provide new/expanded **educational and job training opportunities for low-income residents**. Many area organizations are working to address Decatur's priority need for increased job training, literacy, education, and employment services. Limited funding has been allocated for an organization/program(s) to assist in these efforts in conjunction with other funding sources.
- Continuing to promote **neighborhood revitalization** through support of the Coalition of Neighborhood Organizations (CONO) and crime prevention activities.

**Other Strategic Plan Initiatives** are presented in Section VI. A highlight of this section is the plan to address needs in the locally-established **Neighborhood Regeneration Area**. The City's required **Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing**, and strategy to address these impediments, is included in this section, as is the required **Monitoring Plan**. Other initiatives aim to address lead-based paint hazards, eliminate barriers to affordable housing, reduce the number of families in poverty, assist public housing residents, and build institutional structure.

The final **Section VII** presents the City's Fiscal Year **2010 Annual Action Plan**. This identifies the 2010 allocation amounts of CDBG and HOME monies and how they will be used, in conjunction with program income, carryover funds, and other funding sources, to address the objectives and carry out the actions presented in the Consolidated Plan. It also states HOME match requirements and the manner in which the City intends to address other areas covered in

the Consolidated Plan during FY2010. The City proposes to address its objectives in FY2010 through programs which: rehabilitate housing for low-income homeowners; assist the disabled with improved access and mobility; provide emergency repairs to enable families to remain in their homes; initiate a tenant counseling program; provide funding to support a job training/educational program; continue code enforcement and demolition of abandoned and substandard structures; continue to support CONO and the Homeward Bound Partnership; and continue programs funded through the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009* to address homeless prevention, energy efficiency, and infrastructure improvements. The expected outcomes will provide decent, safe, and affordable housing and a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income persons, and extend and strengthen partnerships with other community organizations.

**City of Decatur Illinois  
Consolidated Plan 2010-14 Objectives**

**Rental Housing Objectives**

RH-1: Provide housing counseling services to low income renter households.

RH-2: Provide additional affordable rental housing opportunities to meet a specific need.

RH-3: Continue assisting low-income renters to sustain housing and prevent homelessness.

**Owner Housing Objectives**

OH-1: Improve existing housing conditions for low-income homeowners.

OH-2: Provide financial assistance to low income first-time homebuyers.

OH-3: Provide new home ownership opportunities for low income households.

**Homelessness Objectives**

HL-1: Continue to coordinate with homeless service providers and other organizations to educate the public about homelessness.

HL-2: Continue to support the Homeward Bound transitional housing program.

HL-3: Continue to administer the 2009 HPRP grant and pursue renewed funding if available.

HL-4: Support efforts to increase the number of emergency, transitional, and permanent beds and units for homeless individuals and families for which no or limited housing is currently available.

**Special Needs Objectives**

SN-1: Support additional affordable housing opportunities for special needs population groups.

**Community Development Objectives**

CD-1: Continue code enforcement of abandoned, unsafe and substandard structures.

CD-2: Continue demolition of abandoned, unsafe and substandard structures.

**Infrastructure Objectives**

I-1: Continue to improve infrastructure in low income neighborhoods by replacement or repair.

**Public Facilities Objectives**

PF-1: Support the development and/or rehabilitation of public facilities which address an identified community need.

#### Public Services Objectives

PS-1: Collaborate with vocational, business, and other organizations to provide new/expanded educational and job training opportunities for low-income residents.

#### Economic Development Objectives

ED-1: Support the sustainability of the Wabash Crossing development.

ED-2: Proactively identify and pursue clean-up and reuse of functionally obsolete and vacant properties.

ED-3: Rehabilitate and restore historic buildings and facades.

#### Neighborhood Revitalization Objectives

NR-1: Continue support of the Coalition of Neighborhood Organizations (CONO).

NR-2: Support crime prevention activities within the Neighborhood Regeneration Area.

**SECTION I**  
**MANAGING THE PROCESS**

## SECTION I: MANAGING THE PROCESS

### A. Scope and Purpose

As established in the United States Federal Register, 24 CFR Part 91 published January 1995 and updated through February 2006, the overall goal of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD) is **to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities principally for low- and moderate-income persons. The primary means towards this end is to extend and strengthen partnerships among all levels of government and the private sector, including for-profit and non-profit organizations, in the production and operation of affordable housing.**

In order to receive funding from CPD, local governments are required to submit a **Five-Year Consolidated Plan**. This document must state the jurisdiction's plan to pursue these goals for its community planning and development programs, as well as for housing programs. It is these goals against which the Plan and the jurisdiction's performance under the Plan will be evaluated by HUD.

The Consolidated Plan must be more than just an application for federal funding, however. Its function is to serve as:

- A planning document for the jurisdiction, which builds on a participatory process among citizens, organizations, businesses, and other stakeholders;
- A submission for federal funds under HUD's formula grant programs for jurisdictions;
- A strategy to be followed in carrying out HUD programs; and
- A management tool for assessing performance and tracking results.

The Plan is required to analyze the community's current situation and needs, identify resources available to meet the needs, and set a unified vision and long-term strategies and short-term action steps to address priority unmet needs. It also can, and is, used as a resource in securing other grants by the City and other local governmental units and public agencies.

In short, the Consolidated Plan is intended to be a living, working document that assists the entire community in working together to address the CPD goals for its residents. It is the intent of this document to serve that purpose for the **City of Decatur, Illinois**.

## **B. Lead Agency**

The City of Decatur receives two types of funding each year from the HUD: Community Development Block Grant (**CDBG**) and Home Investment Partnerships Program (**HOME**) funds. Other special, one-time allocations of funding through these programs have also occurred, such as through the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (**ARRA**). Day-to-day administration of these funds is carried out by the Neighborhood Outreach Division of the Neighborhood Services Department, under direction of the Director of Neighborhood Services. Ultimate authority rests with the City Manager. All program and funding decisions are approved by the Mayor and City Council, including all projects and programs in the Annual Action Plan (and any that should arise through amendments to the Plan), and also all Written Agreements with subrecipient agencies and Community Housing Development Organizations (**CHDOs**).

The Neighborhood Services Department, Neighborhood Outreach Division is charged with the preparation and submission of the Five-Year Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plans, the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (**CAPER**) and environmental reviews. Neighborhood Outreach division staff coordinate the process and, with the assistance of the Assistant City Manager for Public Information, carry out the citizen participation process including holding public hearings, publishing legal notices, collecting and responding to public comments, and presenting the plans to City Council for approval.

The Neighborhood Services Department administers and carries out most of the programs and activities funded through CDBG and HOME. Staff currently includes one Director, one Neighborhood Programs Manager, two Neighborhood Program Specialists, and two Rehabilitation Construction Specialists. Code enforcement and demolition are carried out by the Neighborhood Inspections Division, which includes two CDBG-funded inspectors. See *Appendix A* for an organizational chart of the City staff.

## **C. The Planning Process**

Neighborhood Outreach staff began the process of developing the 2010-14 Five-Year Consolidated Plan in summer 2009. A consultant (a former Neighborhood Program staff member who was familiar with the City's programs and the planning process) was hired in September 2009 to coordinate the process.

**Citizen participation** and **consultation** are two integral components of the consolidated planning process. The City's **Citizen Participation Plan** is included in Part D of this Section. Accordingly, two **community workshops** were held, on November 17th and November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009, to explain the planning process and to solicit comments on the needs and priorities of Decatur residents as they related to decent housing, suitable living environments, and expanded economic opportunity. To solicit further public comment, a **Community Needs/Priorities Survey Form** was distributed and was made available on the City's website and at the

Development Services office. The survey was also distributed to applicants of CDBG- and HOME-funded programs. Thirty-four participants attended the community workshops and thirty-eight survey responses were received. Comments from the workshops and surveys were used to help identify the community's priority needs.

**Consultations** were held with representatives of area housing and public service agencies to determine the existing conditions, needs and priorities regarding the population groups which they serve. Agencies interviewed included those representing housing, public housing, homelessness, economic development, and public services for youth, seniors, persons with mental and physical disabilities, and health care. A variety of **documents** were collected and referenced including (but not limited to) the Decatur Housing Authority's Five year Plan, the Macon County & Decatur Comprehensive Plan, the Decatur-Macon County Opportunities Corporation Community Action Plan, and the United Way of Decatur and Mid-Illinois' Survey of Unmet Community Needs. **Data** was gathered from a variety of sources including the Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (**CHAS**) data, 2000 Census data, and other sources. In addition, the consultant attended **meetings** of several service providers including the Decatur Fair Housing Committee, the Homeless Council, the Human Services Area Consortium, and the Decatur Jobs Council to explain the Consolidated Plan process and solicit input. The Community Needs/Priorities Survey Form was distributed at these meetings, and agency representatives were encouraged to distribute these to, and solicit input from, their client base.

The information received through public comments, agency consultations and data sources was used to prepare a draft Consolidated Plan which included the Strategic Plan outlining the City's priority needs, goals, and objectives. The five-year objectives and actions were then used to complete the draft 2010-11 Annual Action Plan. The complete **Draft Consolidated Plan and FY2010 Action Plan** was presented at a public hearing on January 28, 2010. Following the Hearing, the Draft was made available on the City's website and at three public locations: the City offices, the Decatur Public Library, and the Decatur Housing Authority. Comments from citizens were again solicited at the hearing and for a 30-day comment period thereafter. The public hearing was noticed in two newspapers, the *Herald and Review* and the *Decatur Tribune*. Press releases were also sent to, and used by, other local news media. Following the comment period, the **Final Consolidated Plan and FY2010 Action Plan** was presented to the Decatur City Council on March 1, 2010.

Attached as **Appendix B** is documentation of the citizen participation process, a list of the agencies interviewed, survey forms received, and minutes of community workshops and the public hearing held in preparation of this Consolidated Plan.

#### **D. Institutional Structure and Coordination**

As previously stated, the Neighborhood Outreach Division of the Neighborhood Services Department carries the full responsibility for coordinating, scheduling, and carrying out the components of the City of Decatur's Consolidated Plan and Action Plan. However, many other organizations share in the City's efforts to meet Decatur's housing and community development needs. Decatur prides itself on the close coordination and working relationship between its many governmental and public service agencies to address the needs of its low income and homeless residents. The coordination of resources and efforts is accomplished through ongoing discussions with service providers and periodic special meetings and public hearings to solicit their comments.

Decatur currently has two certified Community Housing Development Organizations (**CHDOs**), the *Neighborhood Housing Development Corporation* (**NHDC**) and the *Near Westside Restoration and Preservation Society* (**NWRAPS**), which are eligible to apply for and receive funding through an annual grant cycle. As required, at least 15% of the City's HOME entitlement is set-aside for CHDO projects. Occasionally, the City also makes additional project funds and/or operating funds available to the CHDOs. The CHDOs are monitored annually to ensure compliance with federal and local guidelines.

In addition to the two CHDOs, the City has partnered with other agencies to carry out HOME-funded activities including:

- *Heritage Behavioral Health Center*, which constructed 51 HOME-assisted supportive rental housing units for persons with mental illness.
- *Dove, Inc.*, a local faith-based nonprofit organization, to construct an 8-unit supportive rental housing development for women recovering from substance abuse and their families, an 8-unit permanent supportive housing for formerly homeless families, and a 14-unit SRO for chronically homeless individuals.
- *Woodford Homes, Inc.* for construction of 24 new supportive rental units for persons with mental illness and the homeless. Woodford Homes is overseen by the *Macon County Mental Health Board*.

The City partners with various public service agencies and neighborhood organizations to carry out CDBG-funded activities. Currently these include but are not limited to:

- *The Coalition of Neighborhood Organizations* (**CONO**) for outreach and grants to neighborhood organizations.

- ***Richland Community College (Project READ) and Dove*** for a community-wide literacy program for low-income adults.

The City works closely with various other organizations to carry out housing, homeless, and community and economic development objectives. These include, but are not limited to:

- ***The Decatur/Macon County Homeless Council Continuum of Care.*** City staff is actively involved with the Homeless Council. The Homeless Council provides a forum to all agencies involved with homelessness to exchange ideas, identify gaps in services, conduct the Point in Time surveys, and increase public awareness of homeless issues.
- ***Homeward Bound Partnership.*** The City is one of the six partners which oversee Decatur's transitional housing program and review applicants for transitional housing units. In this role, the City works closely with the other partners: *Dove, Inc., the Decatur-Macon County Opportunities Corporation (DMCOC) the local community action agency, the Decatur Housing Authority (DHA), the Community Investment Corporation of Decatur (CICD), and Heritage Behavioral Health Center.*
- ***The Decatur Housing Authority (DHA).*** Besides consulting with the DHA in preparation of this Consolidated Plan, the City's relationship with the DHA is ongoing. Over the past ten years, the City partnered with DHA and East Lake Management Corp. to develop the Wabash Crossing affordable housing project which provides 471 rental housing units (public, affordable, and market rate) and 3 new home ownership units.
- ***Soyland Access to Independent Living (SAIL),*** as an advisor on issues facing people with physical disabilities and, in particular, on increasing independent living options and fair housing.
- ***Heritage Behavioral Health Center.*** Heritage is the primary provider of housing and services to persons with mental and substance abuse disabilities in Decatur/Macon County. In addition, Heritage is actively involved in addressing homelessness and operates the *Oasis Drop-In Center* for the homeless.
- ***The Decatur Fair Housing Committee.*** City staff plays an active role on this committee, formed in 1999 to address identified impediments to fair housing in the community. The committee is made up of several local lending institutions as well as

housing and service organizations. This committee conducts workshops and other events to educate and inform the community on fair housing issues.

- ***HUD-Certified Housing Counseling Agencies.*** Currently, two local agencies receive funding from HUD to counsel low-income potential home buyers: The *Community Investment Corporation of Decatur (CICD)*'s *Welcome Home program* and *Central Illinois Debt Management and Credit Education Inc. (CIDMCE)*. The City works refers clients of its Homebuyer Program to these agencies for counseling.
- ***The United Way of Decatur and Mid-Illinois***, which funds numerous area social service agencies and operates "First Call for Help" , a referral system that links people to needed services, and is involved in numerous community involvement/engagement projects.
- ***Decatur Macon County Economic Development Corporation (EDC)***. The EDC is the lead agency for work force development. The City of Decatur funds approximately 25% of the EDC's annual budget as well as partnerships of public and private funds.
- ***DCDF, Inc.*** established as an extension of the City of Decatur, assists with issues related to providing decent housing and a suitable living environment for all citizens, particularly those of low or moderate income; and to provide economic assistance to new and/or existing businesses.
- ***Get the Lead Out (GLO)***. The City is in partnership with the Illinois Department of Public Health with this program to reduce or mitigate lead hazards, based on referrals.
- ***Community Investment Corporation of Decatur (CICD)*** was organized as a private, not-for-profit corporation. Its focus is on small business, entrepreneurship, business incubation and enterprise development.
- ***Decatur-Macon County Senior Center***, to which the City contributes financial support annually, provides financial counseling, outreach, housing assistance, medical services, and information/referral to citizens 55 and older.
- ***Decatur Area Convention and Visitors Bureau*** is in charge of tourism and activity development for the City. This includes athletics, recreation and heritage tourism.

In addition, the City has numerous **Boards and Commissions** to which all members are appointed by the Mayor. These include the:

- Decatur Housing Authority
- Decatur Area Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Civic Center Board
- Civil Service Commission
- Library Board of Directors
- Planning Commission
- Zoning Commission
- Traffic and Parking Commission
- Human Relations Commission
- Transit Advisory Commission
- Construction and Housing Board of Appeals
- Historic and Architectural Sites Commission (HASC)
- Neighborhood Improvements Commission.

In 2005, the City Council added the **Neighborhood Improvements Commission**. This serves as the official organization for providing input and making recommendations to the City Council and city staff on issues designed to build upon neighborhood strengths and prevent their decline. The Commission is the official channel for hearing concerns and complaints from neighborhood groups and residents, providing direction on neighborhood policy issues, helping to solicit and provide input into the annual CDBG and HOME funding process, and developing grant programs for neighborhood improvement projects. The Commission includes three members from the Coalition of Neighborhood Organizations (CONO), three from the Decatur Landlord's Association, and three at-large members appointed by the Mayor. The Assistant City Manager of Public Information serves as staff liaison.

During the years covered by this Consolidated Plan, the City looks forward to continuing and strengthening its relationship with these organizations, and to forming new partnerships with various housing, homeless, economic development, faith-based, and public service agencies to carry out its programs.

### **E. Citizen Participation Plan**

Section 91.105 of the Consolidated Plan Final Rule (24 CFR Part 91) requires each participating jurisdiction (**PJ**) to adopt a **Citizen Participation Plan** that sets forth its policies and procedures for citizen participation. The Citizen Participation Plan must provide for and encourage citizens to participate in the development of the consolidated plan, any substantial amendments to the consolidated plan, and the performance report. It is designed specifically to encourage

participation by the residents of predominantly low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, minorities and non-English speaking persons, as well as persons with disabilities, local and regional institutions and other organizations, and residents of public and assisted housing developments. The Citizen Participation Plan and any substantial amendments must be made public and available for citizen comment. Accordingly, the City of Decatur has hereby established the following Citizen Participation Plan.

### **1. General Provisions**

The City of Decatur will provide for and encourage citizen participation in an advisory role in planning, implementing and assessing each aspect of its program (the **Program**) for utilizing funds received through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) office of Community Planning and Development; namely, the development of the Five-year Consolidated Plan, any substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan, the Annual Action Plan, Environmental Review Record (ERR) and the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). None of the provisions for citizen participation listed below will be construed to restrict the responsibility and authority of the City of Decatur for the development of application for funding through this Program.

The following written Citizen Participation Plan sets forth the procedures that implement each of the requirements as set forth in Section 91.105 of the Consolidated Plan Final Rule, 24 CFR Part 91, of January 5, 1995 as updated through February 6, 2006.

### **2. Standards of Participation**

The City of Decatur will provide a process of citizen participation at both the community-wide and neighborhood levels. The process will meet the following standards:

1. All aspects of citizen participation will be conducted in an open manner, with freedom of access for all interested persons;
2. The City of Decatur will encourage participation by low and very low income persons, members of minority groups and non-English speaking persons, residents of areas where a significant amount of funds are proposed to be used, persons with disabilities, residents of public and assisted housing developments and targeted revitalization areas, and other local regional institutions and organizations;
3. The City of Decatur will make reasonable effort to ensure continuity of involvement of citizens and citizen organizations throughout all stages of the program; and
4. The City will utilize a variety of techniques to solicit community involvement and provide citizens with a reasonable opportunity to submit comments.

### **3. Adequate Information**

The City of Decatur will provide full public access to program information and make affirmative efforts to provide adequate information to citizens, particularly those of low and very low-income and those residing in areas where a significant amount of funds are proposed to be used.

The following program information will be provided to citizens in the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan:

1. Total amount of Community Development Block Grant funds and HOME funds available to the City of Decatur for community development and housing activities, when available;
2. The range of activities that is planned to be undertaken with these federal funds;
3. Notice of opportunity to provide input in drafting and approving the funding application, as well as a schedule of meetings and hearings;
4. The role of citizens in the program, in conformity with federal rules and regulations (24 CFR 91.105); and
5. A summary of important program requirements.

The City of Decatur will provide full and timely disclosure of its Program records and information consistent with applicable state and local laws regarding personal privacy and obligations of confidentiality. Documents relevant to the Program, and to the City's use of assistance under programs it covers during the past five years, will be made available at the Neighborhood Outreach Division during normal working hours for review upon request.

The City of Decatur will make available copies of the Citizen Participation Plan, the Consolidated Plan and any substantial amendments, the Annual Action Plan (including the amount of funding the jurisdiction expects to receive), and the Comprehensive Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) at places conveniently located for persons affected by the program and accessible to persons with physical disabilities. It is the general practice of the City of Decatur to make available this information at three common sites:

Decatur Housing Authority (Lobby Area) located at 1808 E. Locust Street, Decatur, IL; Decatur Public Library (Reference Area) located at 247 E. North Street, Decatur, IL; and City of Decatur, Department of Neighborhood Services, 3rd Floor, Decatur Civic Center, #1 Gary K. Anderson Plaza, Decatur, Illinois.

### **4. Public Hearings / Meetings**

The City will hold at least two official public hearings annually, one to present and receive comments on the draft Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan, and one to present and receive comments on the CAPER. Additional public hearings, meetings or workshops on either document may be held during its development process. Hearings will be held at times and

locations which permit broad participation, particularly by low and very low income persons and by residents of areas where a significant amount of funds are proposed to be used. Hearings will be held at times and locations accessible by public transportation, and at locations accessible to persons with physical disabilities. Upon request at least one week prior to the hearing, accommodation will be made for persons with a hearing disability. If notified at least one week in advance that at least ten (10) non-English speaking residents will attend a public hearing, the City will make its best effort to have a translator available at the hearing or to have a summary of the document translated.

#### **5. Notices of Public Hearings**

The City of Decatur, at least fifteen (15) days prior to a public hearing on any aspect of the Program, will publish notice in easily-readable type in the classified section of the *Decatur Tribune* and send a press release to the *Decatur Herald & Review*. In addition, the City of Decatur will make reasonable effort to provide notices, in the form of press releases, to neighborhood organizations and local agencies serving low and very low income persons. The City of Decatur will make reasonable effort to publicize widely these hearings, through means such as public service radio and television announcements, mass mailings, the City's government access channel, and on the City's website, [www.decaturlil.gov](http://www.decaturlil.gov).

#### **6. Submission of Comments**

The City of Decatur will provide for and encourage the submission of views and proposals regarding the Program by its citizens. Such views and comments may be submitted at any time during the year. However, in order to be included with submission of a particular document to HUD, the comments must be received by the date published in the official public notice for the final public hearing on the draft of that document. This includes submission of written comments generated before or during neighborhood and community-wide meetings, formal public hearings, or orally at official public hearings.

#### **7. Comment period on Draft Documents**

A final draft of the Consolidated Plan, Citizen Participation Plan, and Annual Action Plan will be available for public comment for not less than thirty (30) days following the final official public hearing on the document before submission to HUD. A final draft of the annual CAPER will be available for public comment for not less than fifteen (15) days following the final official public hearing on the document before submission to HUD. These draft documents will be available for examination at the three locations specified in Item 3. above, on the City of Decatur's website ([www.decaturlil.gov](http://www.decaturlil.gov)), and upon request from the Neighborhood Outreach Division. In preparing the final document, the City will consider any comments or views of citizens received orally at the public hearing, or in writing during the comment period. A summary of these comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, will be attached to the final document.

## **8. Complaints**

The City of Decatur will respond to complaints related to the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, and CAPER in a timely and responsive manner. The City will provide a written response within fifteen (15) working days. Complaints should be addressed to:

City of Decatur Neighborhood Outreach Division  
Attention: Director, Neighborhood Services Development  
# 1 Gary K. Anderson Plaza  
Decatur, Illinois 62523

## **9. Consideration of Objections to Applications**

Persons wishing to object to approval of an application by HUD may make such objections known to the HUD Chicago Area Office. HUD will consider objections made on the following grounds:

1. The City of Decatur's description of needs and objectives is plainly inconsistent with available facts and data.
2. The activities to be undertaken are plainly inappropriate to meet the needs and objectives identified by the City of Decatur.
3. The application does not comply with the requirements set forth in the Federal Register or other applicable law.
4. The application proposed activities which are otherwise ineligible under federal rules and regulations. Objections should include both identification of the requirements not met and, in the case of objections made on the grounds that the description of needs and objectives is plainly inconsistent with significant, generally reliable facts and data, the data upon which the persons rely. Although HUD will consider objections submitted at any time, such objections should be submitted within thirty days of the publication of the notice that the application has been made to HUD. To ensure that objections submitted will be considered during the review process, HUD will not approve an application until at least forty-five (45) days after receipt of the application.

The HUD Chicago Area Office is located at the following address:  
Office Community Planning and Development  
U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
77 West Jackson Boulevard  
Chicago, Illinois 60604-3507

#### **10. Substantial Amendments to the Consolidated Plan**

The City of Decatur will amend the Consolidated Plan in the event of a substantial change. The following constitutes a substantial change:

1. Changes in the allocation of priorities.
2. Changes in the method of distribution of funds, including:
  - a. Changes in the use of CDBG funds from one Consolidated Plan objective to another.
  - b. A 38% increase or decrease for reprogramming of funds to any eligible funded activity.
3. Changes to carry out an activity, using funds from any program covered by the Consolidated Plan, not previously described in the Action Plan.
4. Changes of the purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries of an activity.

A public hearing will be held on a Substantial Amendment with notification of the hearing as set forth under the "Notice" section of the Citizen Participation Plan. A thirty-day opportunity period for comments on the substantial amendment will be provided. A summary of any and all comments and views received during this period, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, will be attached to the substantial amendment of the Consolidated Plan.

#### **11. Bilingual Communication**

If notified at least one week in advance that at least ten (10) non-English speaking residents will attend a public hearing, the City will make its best effort to have a translator available at the hearing or to have a summary of the document translated. If the hearing is held in, or funding proposed to be used in, a neighborhood where at least ten percent (10%) of the residents speak and read a primary language other than English, then all notices of the public hearing and a summary of basic proposal components will be produced in such language.

#### **12. Technical Assistance**

The City of Decatur will provide technical assistance to the degree, level and type determined appropriate by the Neighborhood Outreach Division after discussion with the organization requesting assistance. Technical assistance shall be provided to:

1. Neighborhood and area-wide organizations, enabling them to participate in planning, implementing and assessing the programs offered by the Department in their area.
2. Groups of very low and low-income persons and groups of residents of low-income neighborhoods which request assistance in developing for funding assistance under any of the programs covered by the Consolidated Plan.

The Neighborhood Outreach Division will provide technical assistance either directly or through arrangements with public and private agencies. Requests for technical assistance should be made in writing to the Director of the Neighborhood Services Department.

## **SECTION II**

### **HOUSING**

## SECTION II: HOUSING

### A. Housing Market Analysis

#### 1. Demographic Snapshot

The City of Decatur is the county seat and major population center of Macon County, in central Illinois. Over the past decades Decatur has experienced many of the same trends as other older, Midwestern industrial centers including loss of population and manufacturing employment, an aging population, and an increasing percentage of minorities and lower income persons. As the following American Community Survey (ACS) tables show, Decatur's population has decreased from 90,705 in 1970 to 81,860 in 2000, and is estimated to have decreased approximately an additional 0.5% from 2000 to 2006 to 77,669.

Total Population

	Decatur city, IL
1970	90,705
1980	94,081
1990	83,885
2000	81,860
2003	79,147
2006 ACS	77,669

Change in Total Population (%)

	Decatur city, IL
1970 to 1980	3.7
1980 to 1990	-10.8
1990 to 2000	-2.4
2000 to 2003	-3.3
2003 to 2005	-9.7
1970 to 2006	-14.4

Over this time period, the number and percentage of **minority population** has increased as shown below. The largest minority population group is Black, non-Hispanic, which as of the 2006 ACS was 21.1% of Decatur's population, above the national average of 12.3%.

		Decatur city, IL	% of population
White, Non-Hispanic	1980	79,412	84.4
	1990	68,865	82.1
	2000	62,993	77.0
	2005 ACS	53,122	74.4
	2006 ACS	57,861	74.5

<b>Black, Non-Hispanic</b>	<b>1980</b>	13,548	14.4
	<b>1990</b>	13,901	16.6
	<b>2000</b>	15,846	19.4
	<b>2005 ACS</b>	14,835	20.8
	<b>2006 ACS</b>	16,400	21.1
<b>Other Races, Non-Hispanic</b>	<b>1980</b>	577	0.6
	<b>1990</b>	533	0.6
	<b>2000</b>	2,043	2.5
	<b>2005 ACS</b>	2,538	3.6
	<b>2006 ACS</b>	2,140	2.8
<b>Total Hispanic (All Races)</b>	<b>1980</b>	544	0.6
	<b>1990</b>	586	0.7
	<b>2000</b>	978	1.2
	<b>2005 ACS</b>	942	1.3
	<b>2006 ACS</b>	1,268	1.6

Decatur's **poverty rate**, too, is above the national average. According to the 2006-08 ACS, 15.5% of Decatur's families and 20.5% of individuals were below the poverty level, as contrasted with the national average of 9.6% of families and 13.2% of individuals.

Decatur's **median family income (MFI)**, in 2008 inflation-adjusted dollars, was \$49,232, in contrast with the national median of \$63,211. **Median household income** was \$38,896, with a national median of \$52,175.

Decatur's population is also **older** than the national average, with 16.7% of its population over 65 years of age contrasted with a national percentage of 12.6%.

**The highest concentrations** of minority population, families below the poverty level, and with the lowest median family income is within the oldest urban core area of Decatur. *Appendix C* includes maps depicting these concentrations.

## 2. Existing Housing Supply

### a. Number and occupancy status of Housing Units

As discussed in the Demographics section, Decatur's population increased during the 1970's, but decreased significantly in the 1980's when Decatur suffered severe economic hardship and loss of manufacturing employment. The number of housing units also has declined from its peak of 38,413 in 1980. Decatur had 37,130 housing units as of the 2000 Census, 66.4% of which were owner-occupied. The 2006-08 American Community Survey estimates an increase of 827 total units from 2000 – 2006; however, the number of owner-occupied units is estimated to have decreased by 811 during this period. This estimated increase is likely due to the completion of Phases I and II of the Wabash Crossing housing development and other assisted and supportive rental housing developments completed during those years. The percentage of rental housing increased to an estimated 36% of total units in 2006. This may also account for the high number of vacant units in 2006, as many of these new rental units were not yet occupied.

#### Housing Units by Occupancy Status: Homeownership, Rental, and Vacancy Rates

<b>Total Units</b>	
1970	32,097
1980	38,413
1009	37,369
2000	37,130
2006 ACS	37,957
<b>Occupied Units</b>	
1970	30,707
1980	35,923
1990	34,013
2000	34,086
2006 ACS	33,991
<b>Owner Occupied Units</b>	
1970	21,219
1980	24,906
1990	22,405
2000	22,623
2006 ACS	21,812
<b>Renter Occupied Units</b>	
1970	9,488
1980	11,017
1990	11,608
2000	11,463
2006 ACS	12,179
<b>Vacant Units</b>	

1970	1,390
1980	2,490
1990	3,356
2000	3,044
2006 ACS	3,966
<b>Renter Occupied as Percent of all</b>	
1970	30.9
1980	30.7
1990	34.1
2000	33.6
2006 ACS	35.8
<b>Vacant Units as Percent of all Units</b>	
1970	4.3
1980	6.5
1990	9.0
2000	8.2
2006 ACS	10.4

**Residential building permit data** substantiate this trend of a very low number of new housing starts, with an increased percentage of rental units. The City of Decatur issued just 209 permits from 2004 through October 2009 for new single family homes. It issued 725 permits for rental housing during that period, which includes 484 for the Wabash Crossing development and 92 for assisted or supportive housing.

<b>PERMITS ISSUED FOR NEW RESIDENTIAL UNITS</b>						
<b>Type of units</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009 to date</b>
Single family homes	37	55	44	32	26	15
Townhomes		10			8	24
Condos(no units)						
Apt Bldg		60	80	44		
Assisted Living		36		32		
<b>WABASH CROSSING</b>	207 (2003)		175		102	

***b. Housing age, condition, vacancies, and demolitions***

The low rate of new residential development points to an ever **increasing percentage of older housing units**. As the following table from the 2006-08 ACS 3-Year Estimates shows, over 50% of Decatur's housing stock was built before 1960, and nearly one quarter was built before 1939. Approximately 85% is at least 25 years old. *Appendix C* includes a map depicting areas with the highest percentage of housing built before 1940.

YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT				
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Percent	Margin of Error
<b>Total housing units</b>	<b>37,213</b>	<b>+/-591</b>	<b>37,213</b>	<b>(X)</b>
Built 2005 or later	372	+/-193	1.0%	+/-0.5
Built 2000 to 2004	682	+/-238	1.8%	+/-0.6
Built 1990 to 1999	1,862	+/-388	5.0%	+/-1.1
Built 1980 to 1989	2,839	+/-485	7.6%	+/-1.3
Built 1970 to 1979	5,942	+/-562	16.0%	+/-1.5
Built 1960 to 1969	5,752	+/-649	15.5%	+/-1.7
Built 1950 to 1959	6,952	+/-620	18.7%	+/-1.6
Built 1940 to 1949	4,262	+/-574	11.5%	+/-1.5
Built 1939 or earlier	8,550	+/-686	23.0%	+/-1.9

Due to the age of Decatur's housing stock and the City's demographic profile (aging population, high poverty rate etc.), the **condition of housing** in many inner-city neighborhoods has severely deteriorated. The following table notes the number of housing code inspections conducted and violations processed by the Neighborhood Inspections Division over the past three years. As the map included in *Appendix C* shows, housing code violations are concentrated in the older core neighborhoods of the city.

### Housing Inspections

Year (May - April)	# Inspections	Violations Noted	Violations Abated
2008/09	5,442	381	387
2007/08	4,800	333	383
2006/07	4,880	359	340

**Vacant structures** are also a great challenge, especially in Decatur's older neighborhoods. The 2006-08 ACS survey estimates 3,966 vacant units. However, as discussed, this figure is likely to include many rental units that were not yet occupied. No other definite figures could be found quantifying the number of vacant structures or housing units. The City's Water Department reports that there are currently 2,753 water accounts currently coded "inactive" or "shut-off". However, many of the "inactive" accounts are probably merely in-between tenants/owners. Recent data from HUD, using post office figures, lists 3,023 residential addresses on the 90-day vacancy list. This list is likely by zip code, and therefore would include an area substantially larger than the Decatur corporate limits. The Neighborhood Inspections Administrator believes that these figures are very high and likely to include some of the large apartment complexes which have a high turnover rate, and also people on the "inactive" list for water service that are still living there, but have illegally turned their water on. He estimates that the number of actual vacant structures is likely to be several hundred, but not over 1,000.

**Demolition** of vacant and/or dilapidated structures has been a City priority over the past several years. Increased General Funding and CDBG funding being devoted to this effort has brought an improvement in neighborhood safety and appearance. However, the annual number of demolitions completed may be reduced beginning in 2010 due to the reduction of funds available from the general funds for this activity, and to new State of Illinois legislation requiring adherence to prevailing wage rates. Bids received thus far have increased almost 50% from last year's per unit cost. As of November 2009, there are 150 structures on the demolition list classified as "in process", and 25 contracts "in the works". It can take as little as 4 months or up to several years to complete the process from identification to actual demolition. The following table lists the number of demolitions over the past five years.

#### **Demolitions**

<b>Year (May - April)</b>	<b># of Demolitions</b>
May 2008 – Nov. 2009	39
2008-09	112
2007-08	69
2006-07	63
2005-06	78

The Neighborhood Inspections Administrator estimates that up to 50% of the structures on the demolition list at any time may be **suitable for rehabilitation** rather than demolition in terms of condition/construction. However, due to location, it is not economically feasible to do so as the cost of rehabilitation would be considerably more than the after-rehab appraised value. Also, there are a number of cases in which the homeowner, facing foreclosure, has abandoned the structure and it is then destroyed by vagrants or others, leaving it unsuitable for rehabilitation. Arson is also a problem. Following are the number of building fires attributed to arson for the last five years; most of these are likely to have been vacant residences which are thereby left unsuitable for rehabilitation.

#### **Incidents of Arson to a Building with a Dollar Loss**

2006	15
2007	16
2008	22
2009 (through 12/7/09)	19

The City of Decatur has created several programs to address restoring or preserving existing housing units. These include the Residential Rehabilitation, Emergency, Roof Rehabilitation and Energy Conservation Programs, and also assistance to our CHDO's, which creates affordable housing opportunities by rehabilitating older units and restoring them to code.

### *c. Housing Affordability*

By most standards, Decatur would be considered a very affordable housing market. The median value of an owner-occupied home in Decatur in the year 2000 was \$63,200 as opposed to \$130,800 for the State of Illinois and \$119,600 for the United States. The 2006-08 ACS estimates the median value of an owner-occupied home at \$77,000, compared with \$208,000 for the State of Illinois and \$192,400 for the United States. Rents, too, are considered affordable: \$447 gross median rent in 2000, as opposed to \$605 for Illinois and \$602 for the United States. The 2006-08 ACS estimates the median gross rent as \$596, compared with \$812 for the State of Illinois and \$819 for the United States.

Figures obtained from the Illinois Association of Realtors also reflect the area's relative affordability. The median sales price of a single-family home in Macon County in 2008 was \$87,000 compared to \$165,000 for the state of Illinois. Figures were not available for the City of Decatur itself, so this median price includes the higher-priced homes in the areas outside the City limits. Average sale price for Macon County was \$108,636, with an Illinois average of \$228,824. Figures from the Decatur Association of Realtors (DAR) are slightly different, as they contain homes which are not on the Multiple Listing Service and include parts of two adjacent counties: 1,457 residential sales are reported for 2008 at an average sale price of \$106,479. 1,123 sales were reported through November 2009, with an average sale price of \$116,445. Over 75% of the 2008 home sales were under \$140,000, again attesting to the area's relative affordability.

### *d. Housing Sales*

The Decatur/Macon County **housing market** does not appear to be as negatively affected by the economic downturn beginning in 2008 as many other parts of the United States. According to the Illinois Association of Realtors, there were 1,314 single family homes sold in Macon County in 2007 and 1,106 in 2008, a decrease of 15.8%. The median sales price, however, rose by 4% from \$83,625 to \$87,000. For the State of Illinois, the number of single family homes sold between 2007 and 2008 decreased by 18.9% and the median price decreased by 11%, from \$185,467 in 2007 to \$165,000 in 2008. Average sale price in Macon County increased by 2.5% from 2007 to 2008, from \$105,940 to \$108,636.

Figures for 2009 are not complete, but the Decatur housing market still seems to be weathering the current housing crisis as well as, or better than, much of the country. The DAR reports housing sales for September 2009 down only 5.2% compared to 2008, with the average sale price up 3.8% from the previous year. The DAR reports 1,457 residential sales in 2008 and 1,123 through November 2009, with an average of 109 days on the market.

However, according to a December 6, 2009 article in the local newspaper (the *Herald & Review*) and discussions with local lenders, the weakest part of the Decatur housing market is the "lower end" (less expensive homes), which would be affordable to low and moderate-income

homebuyers. This is due primarily to the tightening of credit by local lenders, who are now requiring a fixed minimum credit score of 680 to qualify for a mortgage loan (previously the required score was 660, with flexibility permitted for compensating factors). Purchasing a home through the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) program requires a slightly lower credit score; however, many area lenders do not offer FHA loans. It is expected that the credit market will relax over time, making it easier for lower-income and first-time homebuyers to qualify. The extension of the federal government's \$8,000 tax credit until April 2010 may also produce increased activity in the lower-end market. However, creditworthiness continues to be a major challenge to potential homebuyers in this population group.

There appear to be few programs available locally to assist low-income and first-time homebuyers. The City of Decatur currently utilizes a portion of its HOME funds for downpayment assistance through the Decatur First-Time Homebuyer Program. Thirty-five new homebuyers received assistance from 2005-2009. The FHA offers mortgage insurance assistance, but not all local banks are FHA-affiliated. One program that has been very popular in Decatur is the Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago's "Downpayment Plus" program, which provides up to \$4,000 in downpayment and closing cost assistance to income-eligible homebuyers. Several local lenders offer this program, and available funds are always depleted before the need has been met.

*e. Foreclosures and Foreclosure prevention*

**Foreclosures** are a problem in Decatur, especially due to the housing crisis beginning in 2008. However, Decatur seems to be faring better than many other areas in Illinois and the country. For instance, Decatur's rate of foreclosure among outstanding mortgage loans recently was 1.4% when the national average foreclosure rate was 2.79%. According to RealtyTrac, the leading online marketplace for foreclosure properties, one in every 136 U.S. housing units received a foreclosure filing during the third quarter 2009 — the highest quarterly foreclosure rate since RealtyTrac began issuing its report in the first quarter of 2005. This was a 5% increase from the previous quarter and an increase of nearly 23% from the third quarter of 2008. Illinois' rate was one foreclosure filing for every 141 units, an increase of 13.7% from the previous quarter and 30.3% from the same quarter in 2008.

For November 2009, RealtyTrac shows 433 properties in the Decatur area in "pre-foreclosure" and 96 owned by a bank. There were 21 new foreclosures in November 2009, a rate of just 0.05% compared to a rate of 0.31% for Illinois and 0.24% for the nation. Foreclosure activity was down significantly in November from a 6-month high in October of 60. The average foreclosure sales price is \$50,320.

Few, if any, programs are available to help with **mortgage assistance** for homeowners who are facing foreclosure. The FHA has initiated a Home Affordable Modification Plan. This new

program, effective starting August 15, 2009, allows holders of mortgages insured by the FHA to modify their loans so that monthly payments are affordable, while enabling the owners of the mortgage to potentially receive the full amount of the existing balance on the original mortgage at the time of sale of the property. Other federal initiatives are encouraging lenders to modify loan terms.

Banks and credit unions do refer their clients who are in mortgage default to a **certified credit counseling agency**. The Illinois Homeowner Protection Act, passed in April 2009, gives homeowners who have fallen more than 30 days behind on their mortgage payments more time to work with their lender and/or servicer to develop a plan that will allow them to remain in their homes. Lenders and loan servicers are required to notify homeowners/borrowers when a loan is past due and provide an opportunity for the homeowner to seek housing counseling.

Decatur has two HUD-certified housing counseling agencies: Central Illinois Dept Management and Credit Education Inc. (**CIDMCE**) and the **Welcome Home program** operated by CIGD. Both agencies have seen an increase in clients since passage of the Homeowner Protection Act. CIDMCE, in particular, has seen a large increase in clients in recent months due to foreclosures and other credit problems (bankruptcies etc.). The local CIDMCE counselor believes that more public awareness of the availability of their programs would be beneficial, as would people coming to them earlier (when they begin having problems paying their mortgage rather than waiting until receiving a foreclosure notice). Both agencies would be willing to provide more public education opportunities (workshops etc.) if requested and time were available.

***f. Rental Housing Supply, Location and Affordability***

As stated, the Decatur rental housing market is also considered relatively affordable. The 2006-08 ACS estimates the Decatur median gross rent as \$596, compared with \$812 for the State of Illinois and \$819 for the United States. In 2000, 39.1% of Decatur's rents were in the bottom 20% in the nation and only 3.7% were in the nation's top 20%. The 2010 fair market rent established by HUD for Decatur is \$485 (1 bedroom), \$615 (2-bedroom), and \$820 (3-bedroom), lower than that established for all but three of Illinois' seventeen MSAs.

By far, the majority of housing units in Decatur (approximately 75%) are single-family rather than multi-family. **Rental units** are usually available in both existing apartment complexes and in single family homes. Most apartment complexes are located on the north side of the city, while most rental single family homes are in the inner city area. The primary exception to this is the recently-constructed 492-unit Wabash Crossing development, many units of which are townhomes or low-rise apartment buildings. Some other subsidized or supportive rental housing complexes have also been built in the inner-city area in recent years (see following section). Refer to **Appendix C** for a map indicating concentrations of rental housing units.

As the above residential permit chart indicates, there have been 319 new apartment units constructed in Decatur in the last ten years (in addition to Wabash Crossing), and several of these are subsidized rather than market-rate. Many of these are new assisted or independent living complexes for the elderly. Other than one townhome development, no new multi-family housing was constructed in 2009 or is currently in process. This is indicative both of the national recession and housing market crisis, and of local market conditions.

***g. Subsidized, Supportive, and Special Needs Housing***

While there has been little new rental development in Decatur in the last ten years, that which has occurred is primarily subsidized, supportive, elderly, or public housing. In fact, until the recent nationwide recession and housing market decline, a number of innovative subsidized, supportive and assisted housing projects were developed in Decatur which addressed identified community needs. These needs included additional suitable housing for low-income families, for the elderly, for persons with mental illness, and for the homeless. Most notable, of course, was the 492-unit Wabash Crossing development, constructed in three phases to be completed in 2010. Of these units, 203 are public housing, 163 tax credit, 85 Section 8, and 41 market rate. Other notable new recent subsidized rental developments include:

- The Reserve at Lakeview, **80** units (68 subsidized) for the elderly completed in 2006.
- Tanglewood Village, **36** assisted units for the elderly completed in 2006.
- Keystone Gardens, on the far north side of Decatur, a **50**-unit independent living community that opened in 2001 adjacent to Keystone Meadows, a **59**-unit assisted living facility.
- Eagle Ridge, **76** assisted living units on the far north side of the city which opened in July 2003. Sixty of these units are subsidized through low income housing tax credits.
- The C. Ezra West Townhomes, consisting of **10** affordable two and three-bedroom units, were completed and fully occupied in 2003. Constructed by one of Decatur's CHDOs, NHDC, these units were made affordable through financial subsidies by IHDA and the City's HOME funds.
- Heritage Grove and Heritage Fields, developed by Heritage Behavioral Health Center and funded primarily through HUD's Section 811 program. Heritage Grove opened in 2002 and Heritage Fields in 2004. Together they supply **51** subsidized, supportive one-bedroom rental units for persons with severe and persistent mental illness.

- Harbor Place, constructed in 2005, provides **8** subsidized rental townhomes for women in recovery from substance abuse and their children. Harbor Place is owned by Dove, Inc. with supportive services provided by Heritage Behavioral Health Center, and funded primarily through HUD's supportive housing program and the IHDA trust fund.
- The Roosevelt School Apartments, an adaptive re-use of an old school property, provides **45** one- to three-bedroom apartment units and **30** three-bedroom townhomes. These are income-based tax credit units financed through IHDA.

**i. Subsidized Housing**

The following table lists the current supply of subsidized housing in Decatur.

**Subsidized Housing Inventory**

Name	Total Units	Assisted Units	Tenant Type	Availability
The Woods	57	57	Elderly/disabled	Always short wait list (longer for disabled)
Spring Creek Towers	137	137	Elderly/disabled	Usually short wait list
Greenwood Manor	108	108	Family	
Carriage House I	120	120	Family	Usually wait list
Carriage House II	100	100	Family	Usually wait list
Southern Hills	125	125	Family	Always wait list
Orlando Apartments	87	87	Elderly/disabled	Sometimes wait list
West Mound Apts.	192	77*	Family	*Only until 10/2010
Belvedere Center	123	122	Elderly/disabled	Short wait list
Willow Heights	63	63	Elderly/disabled	Short wait list
Hickory Point Apts.	80	80	Family	Always wait list
Oakwood Estates	80	80	Family	2-bdrm usually available
Oxford House	156	156	Elderly/disabled	Short wait list
Eagle Ridge	113	113	Elderly/disabled	Always wait list
Roosevelt School	75	66	Family	Short wait list
Bristol Gardens			Family	2-bdrm usually available
Wabash Crossing Phase I & II	381	193	Family	Usually available
Wabash Crossing Phase III	90	55	Family	Not completed; wait list started
The Reserve at Lakeview	80	68	Elderly	Short wait list

Although most of Decatur's subsidized multifamily housing developments were constructed in the 1980's and are now approximately 30 years old, only one is expected to be lost from the

City's assisted housing inventory. This is the 77-unit West Mound Apartments, which is expected to revert to market-rate in late 2010. A survey of several of these developments revealed that even when Section 8 contracts expire or the developments change ownership, the contracts are renewed. This is probably due to low market rents in Decatur, which give the owners little incentive to withdraw from the subsidy program, and the high demand for subsidized units.

**ii. Supportive/Assisted Housing**

Decatur's current supply of assisted/supportive housing includes the following:

**Assisted/Supportive Housing Inventory**

<b>Name</b>	<b># Units</b>	<b>Cientele</b>	<b>Service provider</b>
Heritage Grove	17 apts.	Mental illness	Heritage BHC
Heritage Fields I	32 apts.	Mental illness	Heritage BHC
W. Main Group Home	5 beds	Mental illness; veteran	Heritage BHC
Orchard St. Group Home	10 beds	Mental illness	Heritage
Macon St. Apts.	24 apts.	Mental illness	Heritage BHC
Lindwood Apts.	8 apts.	Chron. homeless	Heritage BHC
Antioch Safe Haven	7 beds	Chron. homeless	Heritage BHC
Harbor Place	8 apts.	Homeless/subst. abuse	Heritage/Dove
Pine St. Apts.	11 apts.	Mental illness	Woodford Homes
Clay St. Apts.	14 rooms	Chron. Homeless; mi	Heritage/Dove
Macon St. Transitional	24 beds	Trans. housing for homeless	Dove
Elmwood	8 apts.	Perm. housing for homeless	Dove
Wood St. Apts.	16 apts.	Developmental disability	Woodford Homes
Decatur Manor Healthcare	147 beds	Mental illness	SIR Management
Dove	11 rooms	Domestic violence shelter	Dove
Timari Court	8 beds/1 apt.	Developmental disability	Woodford/Macon
Prairie St.	12 beds/1 apt.	Former DCDF young adults	Woodford Homes
W. Main apt.	8 apts.	DD/dual diagnosed	Macon Resources
CILAs (6 at var. locations)	42 rooms	Development disability	Macon Resources

Currently, there are two new supportive housing projects in development, the Camelot and Charles Street projects, being developed by Woodford Homes with funding from City of Decatur HOME funds in conjunction with funding from IHDA tax credits and the Mental Health Board. Upon completion in 2010, each of these will contain 12 units with supportive services for **persons with mental illness**. Twenty-five percent of the Camelot units will be made available to **ex-offenders** and 25% of each facility will be set aside for the **homeless**.

Woodford Homes recently renovated its Prairie Street residential facility into thirteen units for **young adults who have left DCDF guardianship**, in conjunction with Webster-Cantrell Hall. This facility is staffed at all times, and meets a community need that was identified in "A Study

of Housing for Special Populations in Macon County” published by the Macon County Mental Health Board and Woodford Homes in 2005.

Woodford Homes is also pursuing funding for two supportive housing projects that would address identified community needs. These are a “Green House” project of one or two buildings for up to ten persons each who are suffering from **dementia**. This project is in preliminary discussion with IHDA and should be completed within next few years. The second project would be an apartment building designed for **young adults with autism and moderate to mild intellectual disabilities** who have family support but could live independently with assistance. This project would be in conjunction with Macon Resources and is in preliminary discussion.

Another project currently being developed is North Street Commons, which when completed will provide 13 units of permanent supportive **housing for veterans**. Funding for this project, anticipated to be completed in 2010, is from the 2009 federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program through IHDA. Rather than new construction, this project is the rehabilitation of a vacant existing apartment complex. In addition, \$200,000 of the \$848,000 grant will be used to renovate 4 to 5 other existing housing for veterans.

Decatur currently has no residential facilities specifically for **people with physical disabilities**, or any supportive independent living options. Accessible units are available in some subsidized and public housing developments. New multifamily housing must comply with **ADA** requirements, which is increasing the supply of accessible rental units in the city.

### iii. Housing for the Elderly and Frail Elderly

One of the few areas in which the Decatur housing inventory has grown in recent years is in the supply of rental housing for the elderly, either independent or assisted living, both subsidized and market rate. The tables below list the number of beds/units for the elderly in assisted living or nursing homes.

#### Elderly Assisted Living Facilities in Macon County

Facility	# Units	Location	Fully Occupied
Tanglewood Village	54	Decatur	Yes
Keystone Meadows	59	Decatur	Yes
Hickory Point Christian Village	48	Forsyth	No
Imboden Creek Gardens	45	Decatur	No
The Glenwood	38	Mt. Zion	No
Primrose Retirement Village	76 (32 assisted)	Decatur	No

### Long Term Care Nursing Homes in Macon County

Nursing Home	# Beds	Alzheimer Beds
Aspen Ridge Care Center	195	47
Decatur Memorial Hospital	40	
Decatur Rehab and Healthcare Center	58	
Eastern Star Home	64	
Fair Havens Christian Home	154	
Heartland of Decatur	110	18
Heritage Manor	75	
Imboden Creek Living Center	95	
Lincoln Manor	140	
McKinley Court	150	
St. Mary's Hospital	50	
Total - Macon County	1131	65

From the above table and the Subsidized Housing table in the previous section, it can be seen that there is always at least a short **waiting list** for elderly subsidized units, while units are currently available in several non-subsidized developments. However, this is likely due to the fact that many of the market rate units are very new and have not yet filled up, particularly due to the current housing market which it makes it difficult to sell existing homes. It is expected that over time, and as the housing market improves, these units will be filled.

While there are now new assisted and independent living facilities for the elderly, there have been no new **nursing homes** developed in recent years, nor has this been identified as a need. The exception to this is units specifically targeted to **persons with dementia**. As mentioned, Woodford Homes is currently in discussion with IHDA regarding a "Green House" project of one or two buildings for up to ten persons each who are suffering from dementia. This project is hoped to be completed within next few years.

#### iv. Public Housing

Public housing in Decatur has undergone a significant change in the past several years, with the demolition of the Longview public housing complex and the completion of Wabash Crossing. Completion and occupancy of the final phase of residential units in Wabash Crossing is scheduled for 2010.

Along with the Wabash Crossing units, the DHA also owns and manages three apartment buildings for the elderly (which may include units for non-elderly persons with disabilities), garden apartments and townhomes, and scattered sites. A recent development is the Macon Street apartments, renovated and occupied in 2005, to provide 24 units exclusively for the

disabled, with supportive services provided by Heritage Behavioral Health Center. Identifying a place to house at least some of the disabled population separate from the elderly had been a priority for several years.

The following information is derived from the Decatur Housing Authority's 5-Year Plan for Fiscal Years 2005-2009, and from discussions with its Executive Director.

#### **Public Housing Inventory**

<b>Name</b>	<b># Units</b>	<b>Clientele</b>
Wabash Crossing I & II	168	Family
Wabash Crossing III	35	Family
Lexington	103	Elderly
Concord	87	Elderly
Hartford	58	Elderly
Garden Apts.	50	Family
Townhouses	25	Family
Scattered sites	131	Family
Macon Street	24	Disabled
<b>Total</b>	<b>681</b>	

DHA lost 161 units from its public housing stock with the demolition of Longview and construction of Wabash Crossing. DHA anticipates building additional units over the next five to ten years to replace those lost from its inventory.

DHA takes pride in the condition of its housing stock, and rates all its housing projects as in excellent or good condition, with a low level of restoration needed. DHA receives about \$850,000 annually for capital improvements. In 2009 an extra \$1.5M was received through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), which is being used on many renovation and will be spent soon. DHA also received a \$650,000 ARRA capital grant in 2009 for "green" improvements (new HVAC and lighting) for its office building.

In addition to the above units, DHA manages the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program for Decatur. Currently DHA is authorized for 1046 Section 8 vouchers, with 1008 currently occupied. DHA also has 26 Shelter Plus Care vouchers funded, with 19 currently occupied. Both public housing units and Section 8 vouchers are always in great demand, with a consistent waiting list.

## B. Housing Need Analysis

Based on demographic data, the inventory of existing and projected housing supply, and consultations with agency representatives, the relative housing needs for Decatur's population groups can be determined. Much of the following discussion is based on the 2000 Census data and that supplied in the Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) reports. Unfortunately, no more current data is available. **Table 2A, Priority Housing Needs/Investment Plan Table**, is included at the end of this Section. The data presented on this table is taken directly from the 2000 CHAS data, and therefore does not reflect changes in the amount of "unmet need" that have taken place since then.

### 1. By Income Level

The group which appears to be experiencing the highest housing need is *extremely low-income households*. This is substantiated by the CHAS data: over 50% of total households (both renter and owner) with incomes under 30% of the MFI are spending over 50% of their income on housing. The highest percentages of households cost-burdened at over 50% are large renter (67%) and small owner (67%). Over 70% are experiencing some housing problems: in fact, approximately 90% of large families, both owner and renter, in this income category are experiencing housing problems (Housing problems are defined in the CHAS data as a cost burden greater than 30% of income and/or overcrowding and/or without complete kitchen or plumbing facilities.). Even though Decatur has an adequate supply of units which are considered affordable to renters in the lowest income category, over 67% of total renter households are paying over 30% of their income for housing. Large owner households fare the worst, with nearly 85% cost burdened at 30%. Overcrowding does not appear to be a significant problem, except perhaps in the large renter families.

Locally collected data and observations agree with this finding. With the closing of Longview, the DHA has 161 fewer units than it did previously to serve this lowest income group. DHA continually has waiting list for all units and especially for 2-bedroom family units. Section 8 applications are only taken once or twice a year, and there is always a substantial waiting list. Currently there are 1008 families with Section 8 certificates, and 250 applications were taken on the last date the waiting list was opened. Most units in all of Decatur's subsidized apartment complexes are currently occupied and regularly have a waiting list, many for up to a year. Two complexes report currently having 2-bedroom units available. The director of the DHA sees additional subsidized housing opportunities for the lowest income group as the community's greatest housing need; this same opinion was expressed by other agency interviewees.

Along with the inability to afford even "affordable" housing units, another problem facing this population group is the quality of available housing. Nearly 60% of the rental units affordable to families in this income category were built before 1970, especially 2-bedroom (72%) and 3+-

bedroom (68%); most are even older. As new units are being built, the poorest families continue to occupy the most substandard housing. This may be especially true of owner-occupied housing and large rental units, as so few of these are being built. The Neighborhood Inspections Administrator cites a problem with families illegally living in abandoned, vacant properties or houses with numerous code violations.

Wabash Crossing and some other new subsidized rental developments are, of course, providing more suitable housing conditions and appear to have eased the demand, as evidenced by the current availability of units. However, even these subsidized units are often unavailable to the most needy, lowest income group as these individuals and families often have other conditions (disabilities, substance abuse, unemployment, criminal record, etc.) that prevent them from being accepted into subsidy programs or from landlords accepting their applications.

These findings suggest a need to improve housing conditions and availability for the extremely low income population including: additional tenant-based subsidies or other methods to make even the "affordable" units available; the rehabilitation of older, affordable rental and owner-occupied units to improve the condition of existing housing for this income group; and programs to house the "hardest to house" who have other conditions such as substance abuse or a criminal record.

The situation improves for *low-income households* (30% - 50% MFI). Significantly fewer (11%) of total households in this bracket are severely cost-burdened (expending over 50% of income on housing expenses), with the highest percentage (23.4%) being small owner households. However, nearly 53% of total renters and over 46% of total owners are still expending from 30-50% of their income on housing. The highest percentage of those cost-burdened appears to be small related owner households (66.6%), while elderly owners appear to be the least cost-burdened (26%). Large renter households may be experiencing overcrowding, as over 20% more are reported as having housing problems (which includes overcrowding) than as being cost burdened. While a sufficient stock of housing appears to be available for rent and purchase to this income category, the age (and presumably also quality) of this housing continues to be a significant issue; over two-thirds of these units were built before 1970 and most are even older.

Data suggest that the situation is quite different for *moderate and middle income households* (50 - 80% of MFI) with less than 20% of owners or renters reported as cost burdened. Again, overcrowding may be a problem in larger households: for both renters and owners, the percentage of those reporting housing problems is double the percentage reported as cost-burdened. There are significantly fewer units available for rent or for sale to households in these income categories. This indicates that rent and sale prices in Decatur are considered affordable (even though the lowest income categories have difficulty affording them); and that there may be a need for more moderately-priced or mixed income new housing development. However, it

does appear that over one-third of renters in the 50% – 80% category continue to experience some housing problems; again suggesting the need for improvement to the rental housing stock and assistance to lower-income renters. Another category experiencing some cost burden (34.3%) is “all other” owners; perhaps this is due to individuals living alone or on one income and struggling to maintain a home).

## 2. By Housing Tenure

From the data and discussion above, it is apparent that *both homeowners and renters* in the *extremely low- and low-income* categories have significant housing needs. Over two-thirds of extremely low-income homeowners and renters are experiencing some housing problems, and over half are expending over 50% of their income on housing. One difference to note is that there are approximately twice as many renters as owners in this income bracket: home ownership may present too much of a burden to be a viable option for this population. Nearly half of the 1,716 homeowner households in this income category are elderly, whereas only about one-fourth of extremely low-income renters are elderly. This suggests a need to address the housing needs of very low income elderly homeowners.

*Low and very-low income renter households* appear to be facing increased hardship due to the current economic downturn and the resulting high unemployment rate. Local property managers report a higher-than-ever rate of evictions. First Call for Help also reports an increase in the number of calls received from people facing eviction, and from families that have never called before who have experienced job loss. Calls for assistance with paying utility bills and rent, and for shelter (especially for women and families) are among the highest percentage of calls received. For instance, in November 2009 First Call for Help received **416** calls. Leading all calls were individuals needing help with rental assistance (44 calls), followed by the need for a household item (33 calls) and assistance with a power bill (32 calls).

In 2009, the City of Decatur received \$623,309 from HUD and through the federal *Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (HPRP)*. Of these funds, \$622,144 were allocated to Dove, Inc., which also received \$286,405 in HPRP funds from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), to provide short-term, emergency assistance to low-income households (under 50% MFI) for rent and utility assistance. Services include but are not necessarily limited to: housing stabilization, temporary financial assistance ranging from short to medium-term (3 months to 18 months), legal advocacy, hotel vouchers, utility assistance, housing search assistance, and other services deemed viable by Dove, Inc in accordance with program guidelines. The program will serve eligible persons who would become homeless if not for the HPRP assistance (Prevention) or who are currently homeless (Rapid Re-housing). Program assistance will only be provided to those who can demonstrate the capacity to remain housed after temporary assistance ends. Dove anticipates providing financial assistance to 230 households (390 persons) and housing relocation/stabilization assistance to 250 households (440 persons) through the HPRP grant from

the City. From the DCEO funds it will provide financial assistance to 65 households (113 persons) and housing relocation/stabilization assistance to 285 households (440 persons). This funding is will provide much-needed assistance; however, it will be expended by 2012.

Several other programs are available to provide short-term assistance to low-income rental households through DMCOOC, including the Illinois Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program, CSBG Housing Assistance Program, rental assistance, and emergency food, shelter, and services. All of these services are always in high demand.

*Renters in the moderate income category* (50-80% of median) continue to experience housing problems although their cost burden is much less. There appears to be an adequate supply of rental units available in this category. The completion of Wabash Crossing and other subsidized rental developments may have had a significant beneficial effect on households in this income group, who may be eligible for tax-credit and other subsidized units and better eligibility (better credit history, have employment, etc.). However, the slow rate of new development suggests an ever-increasing need to improve the quality of the existing housing stock for large families, owner occupants, and other renters.

*Home ownership* becomes more feasible for households in the *low-income* (30% - 50% MFI) category. There is approximately an equal number of owner households and renter households at this income level. Due to Decatur's affordable housing market, a sufficient number of units are considered affordable to this income group and are available for sale. However, a high percentage of these households (particularly families) are still paying from 30 - 50% of their income for housing, and most of the units were built before 1970. This suggests a need for housing rehabilitation assistance for homeowner families in this income category, especially since there are a larger number of owners and of elderly owners.

In the *middle and moderate income categories*, there are over twice as many owner households as renters, and the percentage experiencing housing problems and cost burden is much lower. This suggests that perhaps most programs for homeowners should be targeted to households with incomes below 50% of median. Also, data show a lack of housing units available for sale for this income group.

Development of new homeownership units for moderate income homeowners, particularly for the elderly and smaller households (perhaps condominiums or townhomes) might be an option. In this income bracket there are many more elderly homeowners (1,999) than renters (229), similar to the numbers of elderly with incomes over 80% of MFI (290 renters and 2,048 homeowners). These may be the population groups from which new independent and assisted elderly housing projects are drawing.

While the need is great, a number of programs are currently being targeted to assist the very low and low-income renter population: in particular, the 2009 HPRP funds and recent additions to the subsidized housing supply. For this reason, the City has designated the unmet need level for these categories as a **Medium**. For very low and low income homeowners, however, little assistance is available other than the housing rehabilitation programs currently being provided by the City, so it is likely that the unmet need is still great. The unmet need level for these categories is therefore considered a **High** priority. For moderate income renters, the unmet priority need level has been designated as **Low**; while the burden of homeownership to persons in this category are a **Medium** unmet priority need.

### 3. By Racial or Ethnic Group

According to the 2000 Census, by far the largest minority population in Decatur is **Black Non-Hispanic** (about 17% of total households). For the most part, Black households face only a slightly higher percentage of housing challenges than the population as a whole. However, in certain categories this population has a disproportionately greater need. About 12.5% more of the total Black renter households, and 15.3% of total Black owner households, have some housing affordability problems when compared to the population as a whole. In particular, Black homeowner households in the 30% - 80% of MFI category face disproportionately more housing problems. In total, 41.6% of the total Black households face some housing problems, compared to only 22.8% of all households.

While the City's **Hispanic population** is growing, it is still a very small percentage of the total population (less than 1% of the total households). However, 61% of these Hispanic households have incomes below 80% of the MFI and, as a result, many are cost-burdened. According to the CHAS data, Hispanic rental households face similar housing problems as the general population. However, a disproportionately higher percentage of Hispanics who own their own homes have some housing problems, particularly family households in the 50% - 80% of MFI range (86.2%). Counseling and financial programs may assist this subpopulation.

Census data show that a higher percentage of minority households reside in Decatur's older, inner city neighborhoods. Many of these homes are over 50 years old and in need of rehabilitation, which is difficult for lower-income households that are already housing cost-burdened. These findings suggest a need for programs to assist lower-income minority homeowner households, especially with housing rehabilitation assistance in neighborhoods with high minority homeownership. Refer to *Appendix C* for a map depicting areas of minority concentration.

#### 4. By Special Needs Category

**Table 1B**, at the end of this Section, summarizes the priority need level and extent of unmet need for special needs populations. The following narrative supports the listed unmet need determination.

##### *a. Elderly*

Considering the age of Decatur's population, the relative housing needs of the *elderly households* appears comparatively low. In every income range, the percentage of elderly households experiencing housing problems and cost burden is lower than for families or other households. However, while the percentages may be lower, due to the sheer number of elderly households the need is still great. For instance, approximately half of the 1,505 low- and very low-income elderly renter households are experiencing housing problems. Nearly half of all very low-income owner-occupied households are elderly (2,067), and almost 65% of them are cost burdened. This further substantiates a need for housing rehabilitation assistance to elderly homeowners in this income category. Assistance with home modifications to help the elderly remain in their homes and live independently is especially needed. Therefore, housing needs of the elderly and frail elderly have been designated a **Medium** priority.

On October 1, 2009 a report entitled "The Maturing of Illinois: Macon County" was prepared by the East Central Illinois Area on Aging in partnership with the Macon County Senior Coalition. According to this report, based on Census Data, the population 60 years of age and older in Macon County is projected to grow to 33,243 by 2030, an increase of 10,825 (+48%). The report identifies housing as one of the two priority issues (along with transportation). In particular, the need for home rehabilitation and modification assistance is noted. Along with the need for financial assistance programs to complete repairs, the report cites a need for better dissemination of information about existing programs and a need for a "clearinghouse" of information about reputable contractors for seniors to contact for home repairs. Other specific housing needs mentioned in the community needs assessment portion were single-family senior living center, affordable assisted living facilities, assisted living facilities with dementia care, nursing homes with add-on apartments, and supportive living facilities.

Statistics show that nearly 70% of all individuals 65 years and older will need some type of long-term care before they die. In addition to an increase in the need for long-term care as the population ages, there is a critical need to provide specialized care for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other related dementias. Alzheimer's disease afflicts 1 in 8 people 65 and older, and nearly 1 in 2 people older than 85. There are currently 11 nursing facilities operating in Macon County, with a total of 1,131 beds. Only 2 of these facilities have units designated for individuals with Alzheimer's disease. Combined, these 2 facilities have only 65 beds. According to these numbers there is a need for additional units for persons requiring this specialized care.

Woodford Homes, a local housing development agency which focuses on the mentally and developmentally disabled, is currently in discussion with IHDA regarding a "Green House" project of one or two buildings for up to ten persons each who are suffering from dementia. This project has a target date of 2012, and would address one of the needs identified above.

Providing new homeownership options may be unrealistic for most low and very low-income elderly households. Rather, smaller, affordable rental living options may be more suitable. Several private developments have opened in Decatur in the past few years to meet this demand, providing a variety of independent and assisted living opportunities (see Section II.C.2.). At this time there appear to be sufficient openings, and no additional new developments are planned. Also, the waiting list for the DHA's elderly apartments (the Lexington, Concord, Hartford, and Garden Terrace) is usually open or quite short.

***b. Mental Illness/Substance Abuse/Developmental Disabilities***

Decatur has made great progress in the past few years toward addressing the needs of persons experiencing ***mental illness and substance abuse***. Working in conjunction with the City and HUD, Heritage Behavioral Health Center (Heritage) completed 49 new units of supportive housing (Heritage Grove and Heritage Fields). Harbor Place, owned by DOVE with supportive services from Heritage, provides 8 apartments for women in recovery from substance abuse and their children. DHA currently has 26 shelter plus care units (which are considered permanent supportive housing for the homeless but benefit many of the same population). In 2004, 24 public housing units (Macon Street Apartments) were renovated and dedicated to people with mental disabilities in cooperation with Heritage. In addition, Woodford Homes currently has two projects in development which will be ready for occupancy in 2010: the 12-unit "Camelot" and 12-unit "Charles Street" projects. These projects are primarily financed by IHDA, with additional monies from the City's HOME funds.

While the need for supportive, independent living options for persons with mental illness is being addressed, there may be a need for additional group living quarters for individuals with ***severe mental illness***. Heritage currently operates two group homes for this population. Heritage applied for funding several years ago for a larger new group home to replace its aging structures, but was denied due to density concerns. Due to the lack of funding for new facilities and for supportive services, no new group homes are currently anticipated although an expansion in the number of units at an existing facility is possible. Funding for maintenance and renovation of these older facilities remains a challenge, as well. Another need which was identified is for supportive housing for persons with mental illness to remain with their families, as existing housing is primarily for single individuals.

While Harbor Place provides apartments for women in recovery from substance abuse, Decatur has no permanent housing for ***men in recovery***. A supportive, sober, stable living environment

reduces the likelihood of relapse. Persons whose primary disability is substance abuse and who have no steady source of income are often not eligible for rental assistance programs. Facilities such as a safe haven or subsidized sober-only apartment facilities would greatly benefit this population.

No new additional housing units for this population group are anticipated at this time. With budget cuts at the State level, providing supportive services to the existing units is a challenge. For these reasons, the housing needs of persons with severe mental illness have been designated a **Medium** priority.

Persons with *developmental disabilities* in Decatur live in three types of housing: Intermediate Care Facilities (ICF/DD), Community Integrated Living Arrangements (CILA), and in the community. Macon Resources currently operates 7 CILAs in various neighborhoods serving 50 people, each with their own bedroom but with other common living areas. In the past few years, Macon Resources renovated a building on West Main Street to provide 8 efficiency apartments for persons previously in a group home who are able to live more independently. This was a need identified in the 2005 Consolidated Plan.

While there appears to be a sufficient supply of group living facilities for persons with severe developmental disabilities, there is still a need for more options for persons with moderate impairments who are currently living in the community. According to "A Study of Housing for Special Populations in Macon County" published by the Macon County Mental Health Board and Woodford Homes in 2005, approximately 95 developmentally disabled adults live elsewhere in the community, many of whom may be capable of living independently with appropriate support. The DHA provides some housing in its apartments originally intended for seniors, but many do not chose (or are not eligible for) this option and often end up living in substandard rental housing. Professionals agree that additional housing is needed for this group. For these reasons, the housing needs of persons with developmental disabilities have been designated a **Medium** priority.

Woodford Homes and Macon Resources are currently developing a new project, an apartment building for young adults with autism and moderate to mild intellectual disabilities. If completed, this project will address the need identified above by serving persons who may currently be living with their families but could live independently with assistance. No other new housing projects are currently planned.

### **c. Physical Disabilities**

Currently there is no housing in Decatur specifically set aside for *persons with physical disabilities*. According to the above-cited report, the supply of accessible, adaptable or visitable housing seems adequate and there is no particular waiting list for accessible units. State and

federal guidelines now mandate inclusion of accessible units in all new and rehabilitated multi-family developments. Further, many developments originally intended as "elderly housing" are now required to also serve persons with disabilities. This includes all DHA elderly properties and a number of private complexes. However, it is still likely that persons with physical disabilities and on a low, fixed income may have difficulty finding decent, affordable rental units with accessibility features, especially since so many of Decatur's rental units are in older single family homes or small, older multi-unit structures. The director of SAIL expresses a need for home modification assistance for rental units, particularly for entrances to the units and bathroom modifications.

For low income homeowners with a physical disability, the cost of home modifications and accessibility improvements may be prohibitive. Programs to assist low income persons with physical disabilities with home modifications and accessibility improvements, both renters and homeowners, continues to be cited as a need. The City currently administers a CDBG-funded accessibility program for low-income homeowners. SAIL's "Community Re-Integration Program" assists persons coming out of nursing homes to return to independent living. They can arrange for a personal assistant, assist in finding suitable accessible housing, and provide some funds for rent deposits, utilities, household goods, etc. SAIL assists approximately four clients a year through this program.

The above-cited 2005 report, "A Study of Housing for Special Populations in Macon County", notes a small need for specialized housing for persons with major physical impairments, perhaps consisting of a pod of 4-8 units. For these reasons, the housing needs of persons with physical disabilities have been designated a **Medium** priority.

#### *d. HIV/AIDS*

Decatur does not have any supportive housing specifically set aside for *persons with HIV/AIDS*, with the exception of rent assistance at Linwood apartments (2 units set aside) plus one unit at Harbor Place if available, using HOPWA funds. Consultation with community case management providers suggest that this is not a considered a priority need. Rather, many persons with HIV/AIDS experience other conditions such as poverty, substance abuse, and other disabilities for which supportive/subsidized housing may be needed and which may or may not be available. Currently the regional SIU Consortium is providing case management and other services to 65 clients in Decatur/Macon County, and approximately 20 of them receive limited rental assistance. This is for emergency assistance only, not long-term, and based on a unique demonstrated need.

#### *e. Victims of Domestic Violence*

Decatur has one shelter specifically for women who are victims of domestic violence and their children, operated by Dove Inc. In July 2007 Dove's domestic violence shelter moved to a

newly renovated facility which has ten bedrooms, accommodating up to 30 women with children, and common dining and living spaces. The new facility is expected to be adequate to meet the needs of this special population group. According to its 2009 annual report, Dove provided 3,686 bednights of shelter in 2009 through its domestic violence program, serving 848 adults and 288 children.

One challenge, however, is housing and services for men who are victims of domestic violence. Currently Dove places male domestic violence victims in motels if there is a safety concern. This service was provided to 41 adult males in 2009.

A major challenge is finding sufficient funding to continue services to victims and their families. Faced with severe budget cuts in 2009, Dove eliminated its male and female abusers programs (AIM & WAVE) and batterer alternative intervention, services often mandated by the courts. Dove is able to continue providing core services by re-organizing staff, but until the budget situation changes no additional services or facilities are planned.

***f. Formerly incarcerated persons***

Due to its extraordinarily high number of returning offenders, in 2008 Macon County received a planning grant to study the needs of housing for the reentry population. The grant was funded by the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) in partnership with IDOC and the Illinois Division of Mental Health. The grant was awarded to Dove Inc. and originally had three components: 1) to develop a cross-disciplinary planning body; 2) to recommend a new supportive housing project targeting and 3) to develop a directory of reentry services. To carry out this mission, a Task Force was assembled which identified, quantified and analyzed the need for reentry housing. The Task Force also discussed local conditions and potential neighborhood opposition, prior to formulating a set of recommendations.

In July 2009, the Macon County Task Force for Reentry Housing released its report entitled "Macon County Offender Reentry Housing Collaborative Report". According to this report, 500-700 inmates return to Macon County each year from state correctional facilities. Macon County is not only ranked first in the state in the rate of parolees per 100,000 residents (595/100,000), but it also ranks first in rate of felony offenders under correctional supervision (925 per 100,000) and rate of prisoners in state prison (363 prisoners per 100,000). According to the IDOC Placement Resource Unit, in an average week, 5 or more inmates who do not have addresses are released to Macon County. This is about 30-40% of all inmates released to Macon County. IDOC has to locate housing for them. Often IDOC sends persons to other communities where housing is available.

Using the above data, The Task Force calculated that 15-20 re-entering persons per month are in need of housing. This is approximately 200 people every year. Unfortunately, about half of those

are not good candidates for housing assistance because they will not cooperate, no matter what assistance is offered. Based on this, the task force estimates that **the need for housing assistance for re-entering persons is 100 per year.** However, it should be noted that the number is likely to be larger. Some of the other persons released by IDOC have only temporary housing and soon find themselves again in need of housing.

The reentry population is mostly, but not exclusively, male. Upon release they tend to either go into emergency shelters when room is available, stay temporarily with friends, or live on the streets. Housing is needed at all stages: emergency shelter, transitional and permanent. The need for housing varies from 1-2 nights to long-term.

The Task Force examined barriers to housing for the reentry population, various possible housing approaches, and then developed a list of recommendations including: the development of a "safe haven" to house a number of homeless ex-offenders, integrating ex-offenders into newly developed supportive housing by prioritizing returnees for a percentage of units (as is being done with the Camelot project currently being completed by Woodford Homes), and the development of transitional supportive housing using existing housing stock.

#### *g. Veterans*

Housing for veterans who are homeless or living in unsuitable conditions has been identified by local service agencies as a need in Decatur. To address this need, the "North Street Commons" project is currently being developed by a local contractor, D&O Properties One, LLC. When completed, this will provide 13 units of permanent supportive housing for veterans. Rather than new construction, this project is the rehabilitation of a vacant existing apartment complex. In addition, \$200,000 of the \$848,000 grant will be used to renovate four or five other existing housing units for veterans. Funding for this project, anticipated to be completed in 2010, is from the 2009 federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program through IHDA.

The newly-formed Decatur Coalition for Veterans Concerns is currently identifying possible applicants for the North Street Commons project. Using local homeless service providers including the Good Samaritan Inn, Salvation Army and Oasis Day Center, six men were identified living at a shelter, one man living in his car, and one couple that just received Voucher assistance. Eleven men received sleeping bags at "Stand Down" event held in November. Of these, 5 were from the Salvation Army shelter and 6 were from the local neighborhood, but living in substandard conditions and wanting to apply for our project housing. The Coalition is in the process of reaching out to all the Veterans services, the Dept. of Defense and the VA to identify the number of Veterans and service personnel in Macon County

The Decatur Coalition for Veterans Concerns hopes to develop additional housing for veterans and is working with Lutheran Child & Family Services to identify further opportunities. Possible

funding sources for further projects include IDHA, and the Department of Veterans Affairs. They also hope to work with DHA to make Macon County a HUD-VASH (Veterans Vouchers) recipient.

#### **5. Public Housing Needs**

As discussed above, the greatest housing needs appear to be faced by the lowest income groups. Many of these individuals and families may be eligible for public housing; however, the demand is always greater than the supply. Even after the completion of Wabash Crossing in 2010, there will be 161 fewer public housing units than there had been in the Longview Public Housing project. While DHA hopes to replace these units over the next ten years, no specific projects have been announced.

Both public housing units and Section 8 vouchers are always in great demand. There is a consistent waiting list for public housing units. DHA keeps this list continually and re-opens it to new applicants whenever it gets low (two or three times per year). There is also a continual waiting list for Section 8 vouchers. For instance, when the Section 8 list was last opened in August 2009, there were 700 applicants in one day. DHA put 250 applicants on the waiting list and currently has about 200 remaining, which will take about six months to fill with a turnover rate of about 35 per month. The waiting list is usually longest for 2-bedroom family units. Although DHA is authorized for 1046 units, there is not enough funding to support this number. It is unlikely that federal funding over the next few years will allow for an increase in the number of Section 8 units; in fact, the number may be more likely to decrease. The need for additional funding for more public housing and/or tenant-based rental assistance for the lowest income families appears to be great.

#### **6. Needs of Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs)**

Decatur currently has two certified CHDOs, the Neighborhood Housing Development Corporation (NHDC) and the Near Westside Restoration and Preservation Society (NWRAPS). Both of these agencies have provided much-needed affordable housing for Decatur's low income population through housing rehabilitation and new construction.

NWRAPS, a neighborhood organization representing the historic near west side of Decatur, was certified as a CHDO in 1995. It primarily focuses on rehabilitation of vacant older homes, and sale to qualified low-income households. In 2009, NWRAPS completed the rehabilitation and sale (to a low income family) of one single-family home and has another one "ready to go" when new CHDO funds become available. They anticipate continuing to complete one or two CHDO-funded single-family home rehabilitation projects per year. NWRAPS currently has one part-time staff person, a project manager. They would like to hire a part-time Rehabilitation Director to administer the CHDO program, identify suitable properties, etc. They also would like to develop a plan for the various sub-areas within their neighborhood, as some of the sub-areas

have more deteriorated housing and require more concentration and targeting of resources. CHDO funds would probably be concentrated in these areas, particularly the southern section of the neighborhood. While rental housing is not a priority for the organization, they might consider redevelopment of small existing apartment buildings as condos, especially for the elderly. Another possibility might be infill housing on vacant lots, but most of these lots aren't well situated for development (due to parcel size, shape, access, etc.). Other non-housing goals include strengthening the organization, increasing membership, reconnecting with former members, and addressing neighborhood crime, which is a major concern and focus for the organization.

NHDC, which operates city-wide, has completed numerous affordable housing projects over the past twenty years including rental and homeownership, new construction and rehabilitation of existing units. It also has worked with other local organizations to provide supportive housing for the homeless. However, recent housing and economic conditions and the poor housing market for new construction have slowed their activity and led them to develop a new strategic plan. Also, NHDC projects were often partially funded by the Illinois Housing Development Authority, which currently is not funding new construction. NHDC has recently been concentrating on housing rehabilitation and energy-efficiency projects. It currently has one new single-family homeownership construction project underway, Sheridan Circle, of which two homes are sold and four are anticipated to be completed when funds become available and the economy becomes more favorable for home purchase. NHDC still owns lots in the Meadowlark subdivision on the City's far northeast side, which it anticipates developing in the future. Along with single-family homeownership rehabilitation, NHDC is looking into possible rental rehabilitation projects which would include energy-efficiency improvements.

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The City offers information and technical assistance to other local nonprofit organizations which express interest in becoming certified as a CHDO.

#### **7. Addressing Lead-based Paint Hazards**

Due to the age and condition of housing in Decatur, especially in the urban core neighborhoods, exposure to the harmful effects of lead-based paint is an issue which must be addressed. This is compounded by the low income level of the population residing in these older, deteriorated homes. The need for continued lead screenings, lead mitigation and abatement work in Decatur remains an important health/environmental issue.

The City of Decatur continues to comply with lead-based paint regulations since the September 2000 enactment of the Title X of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992 requiring all State and local jurisdictions that receive funding from the CDBG program, HOME program, and other CPD programs to adhere to federal lead-based paint regulations. The Decatur Housing Authority (DHA) and any other organizations which receive federal funds are also required to adhere to this regulation.

The tables in this section provide estimates of the number of housing units containing lead-based paint in Macon County as a whole and in the City of Decatur broken out by low-income groups. These numbers are based on 2000 Census data and a national survey conducted by HUD, which estimated the percentage of homes constructed in the United States with lead-based paint present. The incidence of lead-based paint varies, depending upon the period during which the housing was constructed, as demonstrated in the following table.

<b>ESTIMATED PRESENCE OF LEAD-BASED PAINT IN HOUSING</b>	
<b>Construction Year</b>	<b>Percent of Housing Units With Lead-Based Paint Present</b>
Pre-1940	90%
1940-1959	80%
1960-1979	62%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

The estimates of the number of housing units in the City of Decatur's urban core (Census Tracts 1 through 9) with lead-based paint present are as follows:

<b>ESTIMATED HOUSING UNITS IN DECATUR WITH LEAD-BASED PAINT PRESENT</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b>Very-Low Income Families</b>	<b>Low-Income Families</b>	<b>Moderate-Income Families</b>
Renters	606	991	2806
Homeowners	173	866	2433
Total	<b>779</b>	<b>1857</b>	<b>5239</b>

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

In addressing this issue, the City of Decatur's Neighborhood Outreach Division incorporates lead-based paint evaluation and mitigation work in its housing rehabilitation programs and the Homebuyer Program. Other housing providers funded by the City engaged in the same activity (such as CHDOs and any other housing partner agencies) are required to adhere to lead-based paint regulation as well. DHA is also required to take an active role in ensuring that all housing units occupied by persons using a Section 8 housing voucher comply with the lead-based paint regulations.

The Macon County Health Department (MCHD) administers lead-based paint risk assessments and clearance tests for NWRAPS, DHA, the "Get The Lead Out" Program, and the Decatur

Homebuyer Program. The MCHD conducted 291 home assessments in 2008. MCHD also educates their clients on lead hazards and informs them of proper nutrition for children, good housekeeping practices and current regulations for abatement.

The City and MCHD have been recipients of "Get The Lead Out" grants provided by the Illinois Department of Public Health. Once an Elevated Blood Level (EBL) child has been identified, the Health Department initiates a lead-based paint risk assessment to locate the presence of lead-based paint hazards. The City administers the mitigation of lead-based paint hazards in housing units where there is an EBL case or, as second priority, a child 6 and under. During the first phase of the GLO program, a total of 33 risk assessments (11 of which were active EBL cases) were completed and of that amount 22 families benefited from lead-based paint mitigation work carried out by the City. Decatur and the Health Department are currently operating a second phase of the GLO program under a \$170,728 grant received in October 2008. The goal is mitigation of lead hazards in 17 units at a cost of approximately \$10,000 per unit; of this, 10 units have been completed to date. However, once this phase of GLO funding is expended it is unlikely that the program will continue.

The City of Decatur's Housing Rehabilitation/Lead Mitigation Program has benefited numerous homeowners, providing a healthy and suitable living environment for low to moderate-income families. Because of the lead regulations, rehabilitation costs have risen to incorporate lead mitigation. Licensed Lead Abatement Contractors are few, making the bidding process less competitive. Nevertheless, their expertise is valuable because of the appropriate training, knowledge, and skill in addressing lead-based paint hazards. Although fewer units may now be completed annually, the health benefits are extensive, especially for housing units that do or may in the future house a young child.

#### **8. Needs Identified in Citizen Surveys and Public Meetings**

From the two public meetings held in November 2009 and the survey forms responses, housing needs were a primary topic.

*The following is a summary of survey form responses that relate to housing:*

- *Special program for disabled veterans as top priority for programs*
- *More home repairs for seniors and the disabled; home repair for safety for seniors*
- *Electrical, plumbing, and mechanical program – furnace installation; cosmetic housing improvement program; increased assistance for housing security*
- *Keep home rehabilitation programs citywide, not targeted*
- *Wall repair from roof; basement wall repair; assistance to more washing upstairs from basement*

- *Programs for seniors; increase spending on inner city. Thank you for giving me a residential rehab!*
- *Clean up abandoned homes, they are an eyesore to the City of Decatur. Housing for people with special needs*
- *Energy conservation programs. Increase assistance to Mueller Avenue area. All City programs have benefited the city*
- *Increasing permanent supportive housing for veterans, persons with disabilities, and homeless; Issues: veterans housing, persons with disabilities, re-entry; increase funds to rehabilitate existing housing*
- *H.E.L.P. praises the rehabilitation and repair of existing owner-occupied programs. During this economic time, people who had mortgages may be looking at possible renting and homeowners who have older houses may not be able to afford essential repairs.*
- *Housing and services for formerly incarcerated, services for chronically homeless, services & housing for veterans good affordable housing*
- *More programs to help median/moderate income with home repairs; empty or abandoned housing/property*

***The following is a summary of housing-related comments received at the public workshops:***

- *There is a need of affordable housing for very low income people. Housing should be based on income with individuals paying no more than 30 percent of their adjusted gross income.*
- *Affordable housing is definitely needed for people with disabilities; for example, a woman who is currently living in a \$4,000 per month state funded nursing home because she does not have the funding to make her home wheelchair accessible.*
- *People are inappropriately housed in nursing homes; and there are a couple of pending court cases that will force the state to offer more community action thus allowing people to reside in the community rather than nursing homes.*
- *Recommends more quality rental property and would like to see a program created where landlords can share information about tenants.*
- *Would like to see the Rental Rehabilitation program come back and suggested that properties receiving these funds should be inspected for the first five years after the work was completed to ensure the property was being maintained.*
- *The City should take a stance on slum landlords.*
- *Would like to see a program created for formerly incarcerated individuals who are trying to turn their lives around.*
- *The Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) has been a good program for the elderly and provides a sense of security while also deterring crime.*

- *A resident asked if there was a way to increase the amount of Section 8 Housing. He feels there is a great shortage of decent rental units.*
- *There should be some type of protection for the landlords as in her neighborhood people move into a rental home and just demolish it. The expense of fixing things is too high to just have the homes wrecked. There needs to be some kind of balance.*
- *In Kentucky Section 8 can be used to purchase a home. This would be beneficial since so many homes sit vacant in the older parts of town.*
- *Some type of screening process should be done for tenants as well as landlords*
- *A landlord stated she and her husband own several DHA rental properties and their properties are inspected twice a year. The landlords that do not have DHA properties do not have to be inspected. There are several that are slumlords. She feels the City inspectors that are out for garbage violations, etc., should look around and write these slumlords up.*
- *Several residents stated they feel that landlords should be licensed to help alleviate these types of problems.*
- *A citizen stated that there are many people who own rental properties that do not even live in Illinois.*
- *A resident said there are people who do not do their own maintenance work anymore due to getting older or for health reasons. She feels it would be nice to have some type of list of reputable contractors that people could use and feel comfortable about calling them. Possibly have an on-line list with reviews on it from people who previously used them.*
- *A resident stated there is a big need for the Residential Rehabilitation Program.*
- *Several residents felt there was a need for a program to train individuals for minor home maintenance.*

### **C. Housing Needs Summary**

From the housing market analysis, consultation with professionals, and responses received from citizens, the City of Decatur has compiled the following summary of identified housing needs. Some of these may be currently addressed, or planned to be addressed in the near future, by other resources. The City identified a need for:

- *Improved housing conditions and availability for the very low income (less than 30% MFI) renter population including: additional tenant-based subsidies or other methods to make even the "affordable" units available; improvements to the condition of existing housing for this income group; and programs to house the "hardest to house" who have other conditions such as substance abuse or a criminal record.*

- *Improved housing conditions for low income (30-50% MFI), and especially for very low income, homeowners including assistance with home rehabilitation, accessibility modifications, energy-efficiency, and lead paint hazard mitigation.*
- *Improved housing conditions to existing older structures and additional subsidies for renter households in the low income range. While a lower percentage of persons in this category reported housing need in the 2000 Census, over half are still cost burdened at over 30%. This group may have benefitted in recent years from the opening of Wabash Crossing and other subsidized developments.*
- *Assistance to very low-income elderly homeowners through rehabilitation/home modification/energy improvements to improve living conditions and safety in their home and help to maintain independent living.*
- *Assistance with home maintenance for the elderly through home repair training programs, a list of reputable contractors, or other networking opportunities.*
- *Additional affordable/subsidized living options for the low and very low-income elderly and frail elderly population including assisted living facilities, assisted living facilities with dementia care, nursing homes with add-on apartments, and supportive living facilities.*
- *Funding assistance for renovation/expansion of facilities for individuals with severe mental illness*
- *Sober living environments for men recovering from substance abuse*
- *More options for persons with moderate developmental disabilities who may be able to live independently with supportive care.*
- *Continued/increased home modification assistance for persons with physical disabilities, especially for rental units, including entrances to the units and bathroom modifications. This would also benefit the growing elderly population.*
- *Possible development of a specialized housing option for persons with major physical disabilities.*

- *Supportive/subsidized housing and continued rental assistance for persons with HIV/AIDS who are experiencing other conditions such as poverty, substance abuse, and other disabilities.*
- *Increasing the public housing stock by at least 161 units, the number lost with the development of Wabash Crossing, and increase the allocation of Section 8 vouchers.*
- *Special attention to the needs of the re-entry population including integrating ex-offenders into newly developed supportive housing by prioritizing returnees for a percentage of units.*
- *Additional housing options for veterans and disabled veterans*
- *Continued code enforcement to improve the quality of the existing housing stock, and aggressive demolition of structures which are unsuitable for rehabilitation including vacant buildings.*
- *Exploring options for vacant structures which may be suitable for rehabilitation and reuse.*
- *Continued/increased programs to assist low-income potential homebuyers including financial assistance and homebuyer counseling, and assistance to homeowners facing foreclosure to remain in their homes*
- *Continued addressing of lead-based paint hazards in existing housing stock.*
- *Support and capacity-building for the City's two certified CHDOs.*
- *Support of new rental residential development in appropriate locations, particularly of units suitable for the elderly and persons with disabilities.*

**Table 2A**  
**Priority Housing Needs/Investment Plan Table**

PRIORITY HOUSING NEEDS (households)		Priority		Unmet Need
Renter	Small Related	0-30%	M	878
		31-50%	M	403
		51-80%	L	139
	Large Related	0-30%	M	245
		31-50%	M	168
		51-80%	L	59
	Elderly	0-30%	M	447
		31-50%	M	333
		51-80%	L	24
	All Other	0-30%	M	818
		31-50%	M	370
		51-80%	L	208
Owner	Small Related	0-30%	H	319
		31-50%	H	339
		51-80%	M	228
	Large Related	0-30%	H	83
		31-50%	H	64
		51-80%	M	100
	Elderly	0-30%	H	524
		31-50%	H	328
		51-80%	M	230
	All Other	0-30%	H	323
		31-50%	H	153
		51-80%	M	224
	Elderly	0-80%	M	1886
	Frail Elderly	0-80%	M	283
	Severe Mental Illness	0-80%	M	20
	Physical Disability	0-80%	M	8
	Developmental Disability	0-80%	M	95
	Alcohol/Drug Abuse	0-80%	M	20
	HIV/AIDS	0-80%	L	0
	Victims of Domestic	0-80%	L	41

**Table 2A**  
**Priority Housing Needs/Investment Plan Goals**

Priority Need	5-Yr. Goal Plan/Act	Yr. 1 Goal Plan/Act	Yr. 2 Goal Plan/Act	Yr. 3 Goal Plan/Act	Yr. 4 Goal Plan/Act	Yr. 5 Goal Plan/Act
<b>Renters</b>						
0 - 30 of MFI	10/	2/	2/	4/	2/	0
31 - 50% of MFI	24/	5/	5/	9/	5/	0
51 - 80% of MFI	14/	3/	3/	5/	3/	0
<b>Owners</b>						
0 - 30 of MFI	76/	24/	13/	13/	13/	13/
31 - 50 of MFI	122/	38/	21/	21/	21/	21/
51 - 80% of MFI	45/	13/	8/	8/	8/	8/
<b>Homeless* (2009 HPRP)</b>						
Individuals	830/	415/	415/	0	0	0
Families	480/	240/	240/	0	0	0
<b>Non-Homeless Special Needs</b>						
Elderly	27/					
Frail Elderly	4/	0	0	0	0	4/
Severe Mental Illness	0					
Physical Disability	5/	1/	1/	1/	1/	1/
Developmental Disability	4/	0	0	0	0	4/
Alcohol/Drug Abuse	0					
HIV/AIDS	0					
Victims of Domestic Violence	0					
<b>Total</b>						
<b>Total Section 215</b>						
<b>215 Renter</b>	108/	20/	20/	28/	20/	20/
<b>215 Owner</b>	243/					

\* Homeless individuals and families assisted with transitional and permanent housing

**Table 2A**  
**Priority Housing Activities**

Priority Need	5-Yr.	Yr. 1	Yr. 2	Yr. 3	Yr. 4	Yr. 5
<b>CDBG</b>						
Acquisition of existing rental units	0					
Production of new rental units	0					
Rehabilitation of existing rental units	0					
Rental assistance (counseling)	40/	10/	10/	10/	10/	0
Acquisition of existing owner units	0					
Production of new owner units	0					
Rehabilitation of existing owner units	165/	33/	33/	33/	33/	33/
Homeownership assistance	0					
<b>HOME</b>						
Acquisition of existing rental units	0					
Production of new rental units	8			8		
Rehabilitation of existing rental units	0					
Rental assistance	0					
Acquisition of existing owner units	0					
Production of new owner units	8/					8/
Rehabilitation of existing owner units	45/	9/	9/	9/	9/	9/
Homeownership assistance	25/	5/	5/	5/	5/	5/
<b>HOPWA</b>						
Rental assistance						
Short term rent/mortgage utility						
Facility based housing development						
Facility based housing operations						
Supportive services						
<b>Other</b>						
<b>ESG (2009 HPRP)</b>	480/	240/	240/	0	0	0

**Table 1B**  
**Special Needs (Non-Homeless) Populations**

<b>SPECIAL NEEDS SUBPOPULATIONS</b>	<b>Priority Need Level High, Medium, Low, No Such Need</b>	<b>Unmet Need</b>	<b>Dollars to Address Unmet Need</b>	<b>Multi- Year Goals</b>	<b>Annual Goals</b>
Elderly	M	1886			
Frail Elderly	M	283			
Severe Mental Illness	M	20			
Developmentally Disabled	M	95			
Physically Disabled	M	8			
Persons w/ Alcohol/Other Drug	M	20			
Persons w/HIV/AIDS	L	0			
Victims of Domestic Violence	L	41			
Other					
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2353</b>			

## **SECTION III**

## **HOMELESSNESS**

### **SECTION III: HOMELESSNESS**

Addressing the needs of Decatur's homeless population is a primary concern of the City and a focus area of the Consolidated Plan. The City of Decatur is an integral part of the **Decatur/Macon County Homeless Council Continuum of Care (CoC)**. This widely-respected, active coalition of organizations serving the homeless began in 1994. Dove, Inc. is the lead organization and applies and receives funding annually under HUD's competitive Continuum of Care program. In 2009, the CoC underwent reorganization and is now governed by the 8-member Macon County Homeless Advisory Council Executive Committee or "Governing Board", which meets at least quarterly. The Governing Board consists of the CEOs of all entities which are charged with executing local plans (Dove, Inc., the City of Decatur Department of Economic & Urban Development, the Decatur Housing Authority, Decatur Macon County Opportunities Corporation, the Community Investment Corporation of Decatur, the Neighborhood Housing Development Corporation, and Heritage Behavioral Health Center) as well as the elected chair of the larger Macon County Homeless Advisory Council. This body is also responsible for implementation of the CoC's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). The Homeless Advisory Council meets bimonthly throughout the year and has several active committees including the Point-in-Time Committee, Education Collaboration Committee, and Discharge Planning Committee.

#### **A. Nature and Extent of Homelessness**

The CoC conducted a **Point in Time (PIT)** study in January 2009. According to this study, 176 total homeless persons (115 households) were identified. Of these, 83 were in emergency shelter, 67 in transitional shelter, and 26 were unsheltered. Of these, 33 were defined as chronically homeless. 47 were considered severely mentally ill and 40 as chronic substance abusers. There were 9 veterans, 0 persons with HIV/Aids, and 1 victim of domestic violence. These numbers are reflected on **Table 1A**, at the end of this Section, which is consistent with the numbers reported in e-HIC and the 2009 CoC application and included as *Appendix D*.

It is believed that these figures accurately reflect the number of sheltered persons (emergency and transitional), as they reflect only minor changes from the previous (2007) count. Operators of emergency and transitional housing programs completed survey forms on every resident of their facilities. However, the number reported for unsheltered homeless was significantly lower than in previous PIT counts. This was because the person charged with gathering surveys from the unsheltered homeless population did not submit any surveys. The lead agency, Dove Inc., has engaged the services of an independent contractor to coordinate the 2010 PIT count (January 25, 1020). If available, these numbers will be reported in the narrative of this document. However, for consistency with the CoC application, the numbers on Table 1A will not be amended.

The 2007 PIT is believed to more accurately reflect Decatur's homeless population. On that date, 347 individuals were identified as homeless (209 adults and 138 children) and 494 at risk, with 34 identified as chronically homeless. Of these, the average age was 34. Seven were veterans, and over 50% reported health, mental health or substance abuse issues. Of the chronically homeless, 26 were male and 7 female, with 5 veterans. No racial or ethnic information was collected.

The following tables present the results of the 2007 PIT and a comparison with prior years.

2007 Totals	Homeless	Adults	Children
Single Individuals	81	81	0
Families w/ Children	73	85	138
Families w/o Children	4	9	0
Chronically Homeless*	34	34	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>138</b>

\*The chronically homeless are single individuals with a disability who have been homeless for a year or longer OR have had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years. To be counted as chronically homeless during the 2007 Point in Time Study, the individual must have been on the streets or in emergency shelter on January 29, 2007.

2007 Totals	At Risk	Adults	Children
	494	286	208

Comparison of Total Numbers:	Year 1998	Year 2000	Year 2002	Year 2004	Year 2005	Year 2007
Homeless	253	381	357	364	377	347
At Risk	138	82	368	1187	Not determined	494

Comparison of Chronic Homeless Numbers:	2004	2005	2007
	47	54	34

\* It is important to note that the very nature of chronic homelessness means that at any one point in time you will "find" less than the total population of the chronically homeless because on that particular day they may have somewhere to lay their head.

## B. Existing Facilities and Services

Included in *Appendix D* is a copy of the "Homeless Inventory Chart", attachment e-HIC to the CoC's 2009 Competitive Grant application. This provides an inventory of Decatur's emergency shelters, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing facilities. **Emergency facilities**

include eight separate facilities, for a total of 89 individual beds and 29 family units. **Transitional housing** includes a total of 17 individual beds and 55 beds for households with children. **Permanent supportive housing**, through **Shelter Plus Care (S+C)** vouchers and five separate facilities, provides 55 individual beds and 43 beds for households with children. In addition, the Antioch Safe Haven provides 7 beds of permanent supportive housing for individuals without children.

The City of Decatur is one of six partner agencies in **Homeward Bound**, Decatur's transitional housing program established in 1995. Under management by Dove, Homeward Bound provides case management, supportive services and housing for individuals and families. Potential clients are referred by staff from emergency shelters and area human services agencies. No formal referral is required. Group orientation classes explain the requirements of the program, and what is expected of participants. When accepted into the program, the Client Services Coordinator gathers pertinent information as required by HUD and then a case manager begins working with a client. A participant can be in the program, as long as they are working productively on their individual case plan, for 12 months to 2 years. Six months of follow-up services is available to those leaving transitional housing. Currently, there are 50 housing units available: 17 at Dove's Macon Street apartment building and 33 at other privately-owned apartment buildings and scattered sites. It is unlikely that funding over the next five years will allow for any expansion of this transitional housing program.

In the past five years, Decatur has made considerable progress in providing additional housing and emergency shelter facilities for its homeless population. In 2004, the City was awarded a special \$500,000 HOME allocation to address **chronic homelessness**. With assistance from a planning grant awarded to NHDC by the Corporation for Supportive Housing, the Chronic Homelessness Committee developed a ***Five Year Supportive Housing Plan for Chronically Homeless Persons***, to determine the best use of these funds in conjunction with other funding resources. The result was new housing models to assist the chronically homeless at several levels: the Antioch Safe Haven (7 beds), the St. James Place SRO (14 units), and the Lindwood permanent supportive apartments (8 units). Another unique project, Harbor Place, owed by Dove Inc. with support from Heritage Behavioral Health Center, opened in 2005 and provides 8 apartments for women in recovery from substance abuse and their children. The Salvation Army opened a new emergency shelter for men, increasing its capacity from 15 to 30 beds. Victory Temple church opened a new 12-bed emergency shelter and Virtue House opened an 8-bed transitional facility for women.

**Services** include prevention, outreach, and supportive services including assessment, case management, life skills, substance abuse and mental health treatment, health care, education, employment assistance, child care, and transportation. The 2009 CoC application includes a listing of mainstream services received by clients in the previous year. According to this table,

55 respondents received SSI, 6 SSDI, 20 General Public Assistance, 6 TANF, 1 veterans benefits, 79 employment income, 9 unemployment benefits, 121 Medicaid, 252 food stamps and 43 other benefits including child support, Medicare, LIHEAP, WIC, or a transitional job program stipend. 89 reported no financial resources.

*Please refer to Section IV.F, "Public Services" for a discussion of existing homeless services and service needs.*

As discussed in Section II. B.2, in 2009 Dove, Inc. was allocated \$622,144 from the City of Decatur and \$286,405 from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity through the federal **HPRP**. These funds provide short-term, emergency assistance to low-income households for rent and utility assistance. Services include but are not necessarily limited to: housing stabilization, temporary financial assistance, legal advocacy, hotel vouchers, utility assistance, housing search assistance, and other services deemed viable by Dove, Inc in accordance with program guidelines. The program will serve eligible persons who would become homeless if not for the HPRP assistance (Prevention) or who are currently homeless (Rapid Re-housing). Program assistance will only be provided to those who can demonstrate the capacity to remain housed after temporary assistance ends. Dove anticipates providing financial assistance to 230 households (390 persons) and housing relocation/stabilization assistance to 250 households (440 persons) through the HPRP grant. This funding is expected to provide much-needed assistance; however, it is expected that will all be expended by 2012.

### **C. Homeless Needs Assessment**

The following needs of Decatur's homeless and at-risk population have been identified based on the PIT survey, the 2009 Decatur/Macon County CoC application, consultation with homeless service providers, discussion at the November 2009 Macon County Homeless Advisory Council meeting, and comments received from citizen surveys and public workshops.

#### **1. Chronically Homeless**

Great strides were made in the past five years to address the needs of the chronically homeless, including the development of 39 new beds in a variety of housing models (safe haven, SRO, and permanent units). Due at least in part to these efforts, it is estimated that the number of chronic homeless has been reduced from 173 to 50. Nevertheless, this continues to be a community need. The City convened a **Working Group** to develop a new **Ten-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness**, which was adopted March, 2010. The Working Group, selected from a list of area homeless service providers and stakeholders, is developing the Plan in consultation with a consultant funded by a CDBG allocation.

The new Ten-Year Plan uses an expanded definition of chronic homelessness as defined in the HEARTH Act of 2009, which excludes persons living place-to-place or with relatives and

friends but includes households of more than one person. According to this definition, the Working group estimates that Decatur has **50 households** who are chronically homeless. Of these, 45 are individuals and the other five are family units. The current estimate is a 71% decrease from the 173 persons identified in the 2005 count (under the expended definition). This improvement is largely due to additional services and housing provided by local agencies, with substantial assistance from the City. The Working Group estimates approximately **150 households at risk of chronic homelessness**, using the 2009 PIT and figures from the Decatur Public Schools.

The Working Group identified four major gaps in housing and services for chronically homeless people: food (breakfast and dinners, as lunch is provided by the Good Samaritan Inn); emergency shelter for certain family compositions; drug and alcohol-free housing; and reduction in procedural delays.

## **2. Re-entry population**

Persons discharged from publicly-funded institutions or systems of care are often at risk of becoming homeless. The CoC has identified four population groups for which policies and options are needed to prevent discharge into homelessness: foster care, health care, mental health care, and corrections.

Persons discharged from **foster care** (youth aged 17 ½ - 21) routinely go to a state-funded program or into apartments, or they live with friends or relatives. Webster-Cantrell Hall operates two programs, a Transitional Living Program and an Independent Living Option project (the new Prairie Street Apartments owned by Woodford Homes), to at least partially address this need.

Persons discharged from **health care** institutions routinely go to private homes, independent living facilities, skilled nursing, intermediate care, or into subsidized housing. The threat of homelessness to this group was not identified as a priority need.

Heritage Behavioral Health Center, Decatur's community-based **behavioral health and substance abuse** provider, has a protocol delineating the importance of securing stable housing options prior to discharge in order to avoid immediate homelessness. The provider is mandated to secure appropriate housing at discharge. Heritage is a leader in providing supportive services to homeless persons and operates the Oasis Day Center. However, it is likely that many persons suffering from mental health and substance abuse disorders do fall into, or back into, homelessness at some point after release.

The Illinois Department of Corrections also has a Discharge Protocol requiring that inmates not be immediately discharged into homelessness. Persons discharged from **correctional institutions** routinely go to family homes, homes of friends, or transitional housing provided by the Salvation Army and Dove. However, many ex-offenders frequently fall into homelessness

soon after release. Housing is needed at all stages: emergency shelter, transitional and permanent. The need for housing varies from 1-2 nights to long-term. The ex-offender population is mostly but not exclusively male.

Due to its extraordinarily high number of returning offenders, in 2008 Macon County received a planning grant to study the needs of housing for the reentry population. The grant was funded by the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) in partnership with IDOC and the Illinois Division of Mental Health. The grant was awarded to Dove Inc. and originally had three components: 1) to develop a cross-disciplinary planning body; 2) to recommend a new supportive housing project targeting returning offenders and 3) to develop a directory of reentry services. To carry out this mission, a Task Force was assembled which identified, quantified and analyzed the need for reentry housing. The Task Force also discussed local conditions and potential neighborhood opposition, prior to formulating a set of recommendations.

In July 2009, the **Macon County Task Force for Reentry Housing** released its report entitled "*Macon County Offender Reentry Housing Collaborative Report*". According to this report, 500-700 inmates return to Macon County each year from state correctional facilities. Macon County is not only ranked first in the state in the rate of parolees per 100,000 residents (595/100,000), but it also ranks first in rate of felony offenders under correctional supervision (925 per 100,000) and rate of prisoners in state prison (363 prisoners per 100,000). According to the IDOC Placement Resource Unit, in an average week, 5 or more inmates who do not have addresses are released to Macon County. This is about 30-40% of all inmates released to Macon County. IDOC has to locate housing for them. Often IDOC sends persons to other communities where housing is available.

Using the above data, The Task Force calculated that 15-20 re-entering persons per month are in need of housing. This is approximately 200 people every year. Unfortunately, about half of those are not good candidates for housing assistance because they will not cooperate, no matter what assistance is offered. Based on this, the task force estimates that **the need for housing assistance for re-entering persons is 100 per year**. However, it should be noted that the number might well be larger. Some of the other persons released by IDOC have only temporary housing and soon find themselves again in need of housing.

The community currently has two **transitional projects targeted to ex-offenders**. The Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) has a contract with Dove (through Homeward Bound) to provide temporary housing for 60-90 days for persons released from state prisons. This contract is open-ended and pays on a per capita basis. A Peoria-based organization, New Pathways, is opening a ten-bed facility on West King Street for ex-offenders under a contract with IDOC. Tenants are responsible for rents of \$300 per month at New Pathways, which will serve men returning from drug rehabilitation and homeless men as well as ex-offenders.

### 3. Veterans

Housing for veterans who are homeless, at risk, or living in unsuitable conditions has been identified by local service agencies as a need in Decatur. To address this need, the "**North Street Commons**" project is currently being developed by a local contractor, D&O Properties One, LLC. When completed, this will provide 13 units of permanent supportive housing for veterans. Rather than new construction, this project is the rehabilitation of a vacant existing apartment complex. In addition, \$200,000 of the \$848,000 grant will be used to renovate four or five other existing housing units for veterans. Funding for this project, anticipated to be completed in 2010, is from the 2009 federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program through IHDA.

The newly-formed **Decatur Coalition for Veterans Concerns** is currently identifying possible applicants for the North Street Commons project. Using local homeless service providers including the Good Samaritan Inn, Salvation Army and Oasis Day Center, six men were identified living at a shelter, one man living in his car, and one couple that just received Voucher assistance. Eleven men received sleeping bags at a "Stand Down" event held in November. Of these, 5 were from the Salvation Army shelter and 6 were from the local neighborhood, but living in substandard conditions and wanting to apply for our project housing. The Coalition is in the process of reaching out to all the Veterans services, the Dept. of Defense and the VA to identify the number of Veterans and service personnel in Macon County

The Decatur Coalition for Veterans Concerns hopes to develop additional housing for veterans and is working with Lutheran Child & Family Services to identify further opportunities. Possible funding sources for further projects include IDHA, CDBG, and the Department of Veterans Affairs. They also hope to work with DHA to make Macon County a **HUD-VASH** (Veterans Vouchers) recipient.

**Heritage Behavioral Health Center** provides transitional housing for homeless veterans under a contract with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Heritage provides room and board for up to six months, with extensions possible for another six months. It can serve up to eight persons.

### 4. Families and Youth

While Decatur is fairly well served by existing emergency housing for single males, it is lacking in facilities for families with children, especially for children over age 12 (especially boys), men with children, and minors with children of their own. While the 2009 PIT count missed all unsheltered homeless families, a baseline of 27 families was arrived at using school district data. Many more are at-risk, or are housed inappropriately.

A new facility to address the emergency housing needs of youth is **Hilltop House**, owned by Woodford Homes and operated by the Youth Advocate Program, which provides up to six beds for runaway or locked-out youth.

The **Interfaith Action Committee**, a local group of volunteers and churches whose mission is to identify needs and respond to gaps in Decatur's services, has identified the emergency housing needs of families as a top priority. They have formed an organization called "Decatur Family Refuge Inc." that is currently applying for non-profit status and is in the process of purchasing, renovating and opening a facility to provide emergency/transitional housing for up to five families. The facility would primarily be managed by volunteers, with up to two paid administrative positions for homeless persons. Clients would be referred to other area service providers for case management and supportive services.

#### **5. Homeless persons with disabilities**

While newly built or remodeled facilities for the homeless include accessibility features, many of Decatur's housing options for the homeless are in older buildings that are not accessible to persons with physical disabilities. This has been identified as a need by SAIL and other service providers.

#### **6. Additional programs and supportive services**

Services to the homeless include areas such as prevention, outreach, and supportive services including food and clothing, drop-in shelter, assessment, case management, life skills, substance abuse and mental health treatment, health care, education, employment assistance, child care, and transportation. Funding for the provision of services to the homeless is always a challenge, particularly in light of current economic conditions which have reduced funding to many faith-based and charitable organizations. The change in Illinois state funding to a fee-for-service basis has substantially reduced funding for outreach and services for which a particular client cannot be billed. The outpouring of support by Decatur's residents and faith-based organizations has been extremely generous, as evidenced by the success of recent fundraising efforts for Oasis Day Center and the new Good Samaritan Inn facility. Nevertheless, continued support for new and expanded services to the homeless continues to be a great need.

Please refer to Section IV. F, "Public Services" for a discussion of other existing homeless services and service needs.

#### **7. At-risk population**

One of the identified priority needs is that of the at-risk population – the large number of individuals and families who are at imminent risk of becoming homeless. The January 2009 Point in Time survey did not accurately assess this population; however, the 2007 PIT identified 494 persons at risk of homelessness and who are one step away from being forced out or fleeing from their homes. The Working Group on Chronic Homelessness estimates approximately 150

**households at risk of chronic homelessness**, using the 2009 PIT and figures from the Decatur Public Schools.

Many more may not fit this definition but are close to homelessness due to extreme poverty, recent job loss or foreclosure, etc. While many services are available to help keep these people in their homes, more are required. Services that could assist this population are substantially the same as those targeting the lowest income, “hardest-to-house” population and include additional rent subsidy and assistance programs, financial counseling, tenant counseling, life skills training, education, job training and employment services, legal assistance, support of area food pantries, soup kitchens and clothing pantries, and programs to improve the rental housing stock and assist low-income homeowners with repairs to their homes.

As mentioned, in 2009 the City of Decatur received over \$622,000 in 2009 **HPRP** funds. These funds were allocated to Dove, Inc. to provide short-term, emergency assistance to low-income households (under 50% MFI) for rent and utility assistance in conjunction with another \$286,408 received through the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. Services include, but are not necessarily limited to: housing stabilization, temporary financial assistance ranging from short to medium-term (3 months to 18 months), legal advocacy, hotel vouchers, utility assistance, housing search assistance, case management, and other services deemed viable by Dove, Inc in accordance with program guidelines. The program will serve eligible persons who would become homeless if not for the HPRP assistance (Prevention) or who are currently homeless (Rapid Re-housing). Program assistance will only be provided to those who can demonstrate the capacity to remain housed after temporary assistance ends. Dove anticipates providing financial assistance to 230 households (390 persons) and housing relocation/stabilization assistance to 250 households (440 persons) through the HPRP grant. This funding is expected to provide much-needed assistance, especially to the at-risk population. However, it is expected that it will all be expended by 2012.

#### **8. Public education**

There is a continuing need to educate the public about homelessness. This is a primary role of the Macon County Homeless Advisory Council, which conducts various outreach activities such as the National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness event in November. Homeless Council meetings are also an opportunity for service providers to announce events and activities, share information, and coordinate their efforts.

#### **D. Strategy to Address Homelessness**

The City’s incorporates three aspects: the objectives of the **Decatur/Macon County Continuum of Care**, the recommendations presented in the **Ten Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness**, and **specific City objectives** regarding prevention, outreach and assessment, emergency shelters

and services, transitional housing, transition to permanent housing, chronic homelessness, and supportive services.

The **Decatur/Macon County Continuum of Care's** 2009 application identifies the following five Strategic Planning Objectives:

- Objective 1: Create new permanent housing beds for chronically homeless individuals
- Objective 2: Increase the percentage of homeless persons staying in permanent housing over 6 months to at least 77%;
- Objective 3: Increase the percentage of homeless persons moving from transitional housing to permanent housing to at least 65%;
- Objective 4: Increase the percentage of persons employed at program exit to at least 20%;
- Objective 5: Decrease the number of homeless households with children.

As a partner in the Continuum of Care, the **City of Decatur** endorses this strategic plan and will cooperate with other agencies to fulfill these objectives.

In addition, the City endorses the recommendations of the Working Group on Chronic Homelessness as stated in **the Ten Year Plan** anticipated to be approved by the City of Decatur by early 2010. A summary of these recommendations, some of which are more fully described in the discussion of specific City strategy areas, is:

- Obtaining **accurate data** about chronic homelessness and **estimates of housing needs** on an annual basis
- Increasing use of the **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)** by all prevention and housing programs to effectively serve people in need
- Enhancing **coordination among local prevention programs** to interrupt the process leading to chronic homelessness as early as possible
- Plugging **gaps in the emergency shelter** system
- Developing a community-based system to **screen proposals** for additional housing to assure that new projects will fill unmet needs
- Having the City support and certify projects which address identified needs in the Ten Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness and the 2010-2014 Consolidated Plan

- Encouraging **flexible use of housing resources** whenever possible, instead of restricting housing units or beds to specific categories
- Sustaining the strong system of **supportive services**
- Encouraging the development of an innovative **Chaplaincy Program** to serve the homeless and those at risk of homelessness

Further, the City has established the following strategy to combat homelessness in our community in the following specific areas:

### 1. Prevention

Addressing the needs of Decatur's lowest-income, hardest-to-house population is a priority of this Consolidated Plan. This is the population most at risk of homelessness. The City is currently addressing this need through the allocation of \$623,309 in funds received through the federal **HPRP Program** to Dove, Inc., (\$622,144) to provide short-term, emergency assistance to low-income households for rent and utility assistance in conjunction with another \$286,408 received through the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. Services include, but are not necessarily limited to: housing stabilization, temporary financial assistance ranging from short to medium-term (3 months to 18 months), legal advocacy, hotel vouchers, utility assistance, housing search assistance, case management, and other services deemed viable by Dove, Inc in accordance with program guidelines. The City would consider re-applying for this program if funding is renewed.

*Refer to Sections V. and VI. for the City's housing strategy and programs to assist its lowest-income population and reduce the number of persons in poverty.*

### 2. Outreach and Assessment

Decatur subscribes to the "**No Wrong Door**" concept, whereby access to any component of the Continuum of Care system is access to the whole system. While certain organizations perform outreach to specific groups, every organization does outreach for all groups by linking them with appropriate resources. An initial point of access may be First Call for Help, an information and referral services provided through the United Way, or through religious congregations, health care providers, law enforcement, various social service agencies, or self-referral. Oasis Drop-In Center, run by Heritage Behavioral Health Center, is often the primary point of outreach and engagement in services for the homeless. Good Samaritan Inn and the Decatur-Macon County Opportunities Corporation (DMCOC) are other common points for outreach and identification of persons in need of additional services.

Assessment services are primarily provided by Heritage Behavioral Health Center, Homeward Bound, Dove, and DMCOC. These agencies provide initial assessments, make determinations of

homelessness using HUD definitions, assess eligibility for mainstream resources, monitor requests for services, and link persons with the appropriate source of shelter.

**The City's strategy for outreach and assessment includes:**

- Continuing the current system and expanding/incorporating additional points of contact, especially with particular subpopulations (such as to veterans through the Decatur Coalition for Veterans, to youth/families through the Youth Advocate Program and social service providers, and to the re-entry population through the Macon County Support Advisory Council).
- Continuing to educate the public about homelessness, and coordinate with homes service providers, by taking an active role on the Macon County Homeless Advisory Council and as a member of the Governing Board and the Working Group on Chronic Homelessness.
- Assist in strengthening the tie between the community's emergency shelters and agencies which provide assessment and case management opportunities, to ensure that all clients of emergency shelter are assessed and referred to appropriate resources.

**3. Emergency shelters and services**

While the City's supply of emergency shelters has increased in recent years and may be nearly sufficient to address the needs of individual males, a need has been identified for additional facilities for couples, families with children, especially for children over age 12 (especially boys), men with children, and minors with children of their own. **The City's strategy includes:**

- Supporting efforts to increase the number of emergency beds and units for homeless individuals and families for which no or limited emergency housing is currently available.
- Strengthening and supporting the network of existing emergency housing providers to improve assessment, referral, and case management services, cross-referrals, and to improve the condition of the facilities.
- Supporting efforts to continue, and increase where needed, programs providing emergency services including food and clothing pantries, referral services, mental health and substance abuse counseling, health services, transportation, etc.
- Continuing to support and improve the link between emergency housing/services and long-term case management, counseling, education, job training, transitional/permanent housing, and other resources to assist families and individuals in moving out of homelessness.

#### **4. Transitional housing**

Homeward Bound, Decatur's transitional housing program, continues to provide case management, supportive services and housing for individuals and families. It is unlikely that funding over the next five years will allow for expansion of this transitional housing program. Some of Decatur's existing service providers and faith-based organizations have expressed interest in creating or expanding into longer-term, transitional programs including case management services. One such facility, Virtue House, recently opened to provide transitional housing for women but is currently facing staff and funding challenges. If funded, programs such as this could be a much-needed addition to the supply and range of transitional housing opportunities available. **The City's strategy includes:**

- Supporting the continuation and expansion, if possible, of the Homeward Bound transitional housing program.
- Continuing to support the Homeward Bound programs and participate on the Homeward Bound Review Committee.
- Encouraging the development of new transitional housing programs and facilities by faith-based and other housing organizations to meet specific unmet community needs.

#### **5. Transition to permanent housing**

The City uses two models to move persons from homelessness to permanent housing: the "Continuum of Care" approach of progressing through various levels to the most independent housing they can manage, and the "Housing First" model of immediate placement in permanent housing as the most successful method for then addressing the other needs (for employment, education, health services, etc.).

Significant strides were made in recent years to increase Decatur's supply of permanent supportive housing for the homeless and chronically homeless, as described above. New projects are expected to open in the near future including the Charles Street and Camelot projects for persons with mental illness, and North Street Commons for veterans. Twenty-five percent of the units at both the Camelot and Charles Street projects are required to be set aside for the homeless, and 25% of the units at Camelot are set aside for ex-offenders. Due to limited funding availability, the focus for the next few years is more likely to be placement into existing facilities and rental units rather than development of new facilities.

Consequently, **the City's strategy includes:**

- Supporting the Decatur/Macon County Continuum of Care's 2009 Strategic Planning Objectives to create new permanent housing beds for chronically homes

individuals, increase the percentage of homeless persons staying in permanent housing, and increase the percentage of homeless persons moving from transitional housing to permanent housing.

- Supporting efforts of area service providers to secure funding for additional leased units, Shelter Plus Care vouchers, or new facilities for permanent supportive housing to meet specific unmet community needs.

## **6. Chronic Homelessness**

As discussed above, great strides were made in the past five years to address the needs of the chronically homeless through development and implementation of a Five-Year Plan, including the development of 39 new beds in a variety of housing models (safe haven, SRO, and permanent units). Nevertheless, as this continues to be a priority need. The City convened a Working Group to develop a new Ten-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness, which was approved by City Council in March, 2010.

**The strategy expressed in the Ten-Year Plan is a three-pronged approach: prevention, housing and services.** It calls for early identification and prevention for three target groups: homeless families with school children, young adults, and applicants for assistance from the HPRP program. It recommends a wide range of housing choices rather than earmarking units for exclusive use by persons who are chronically homeless by the HUD definition, ensuring that all housing is decent, safe and affordable. And it advocates the sustaining of the community's network of effective intensive services, including case management, community support, and daily living skill development.

## **7. Supportive Services**

According to the Ten Year Plan, Decatur has an **extremely strong and effective system** of services compared with most communities in the nation. Decatur's system is characterized by a high level of cooperation and collaboration among service providers, and by evidence-based and outcome-based programming. Unlike most communities, in Decatur, the homeless population holds service providers in high esteem; they have little distrust and hesitancy toward human service agencies.

To continue decreasing chronic homelessness, the Ten-Year plan recommends that the community sustain its network of effective intensive services, including case management, community support, and daily living skill development. Services should be rooted in evidence-based and best-practices approaches such as engagement, stages of change and motivational interviewing. As future research is conducted, providers should remain open to new approaches that prove effective. The key priority in the face of declining state and support for community-based services is to maintain the key elements of the current system.

One service need identified in the Ten-Year Plan is for a way to address the spiritual needs and issues of the homeless. The Plan recommends development of a **Chaplaincy Program**, through which trained personnel could listen and respond to spiritual concerns. This would be a multi-faith and combined effort of several organizations. This innovative program would have two components: training current responders (person in positions to be approached for counsel such as clergy, lay leaders, church staff, parish nurses, and behavioral health advocates) in appropriate listening and support techniques for working with the homeless, and creating a position of "Chaplain to the Homeless." who would call on shelters and other places where homeless and "street people" congregate.

**Table 1A**  
**Homeless and Special Needs Populations**

**Continuum of Care: Housing Gap Analysis Chart**

	Current Inventory	Under Development	Unmet Need/ Gap
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**Individuals**

Example	Emergency Shelter	100	40	26
<b>Beds</b>	Emergency Shelter	89	0	0 *
	Transitional Housing	17	0	60
	Permanent Supportive Housing/Safe Haven	55/7	0	40
	Total	168	0	100

**Persons in Families With Children**

<b>Beds</b>	Emergency Shelter	29	0	0 *
	Transitional Housing	55	0	18
	Permanent Supportive Housing	43	0	53
	Total	127	0	71

**Continuum of Care: Homeless Population and Subpopulations Chart**

E. Part 1: Homeless Population	F. Sheltered		H. Total
	I. Emergency	J. Transitional	

Number of Families with Children (Family Households):	7	12	0	19
1. Number of Persons in Families with Children	22	44	0	66
2. Number of Single Individuals and Persons in Households without children	61	23	26	110
(Add Lines Numbered 1 & 2 Total Persons)	83	67	26	176
<b>Part 2:</b> <b>Homeless Subpopulations</b>	<b>Sheltered</b>		<b>Unsheltered</b>	<b>K. Total</b>
a. Chronically Homeless	33			
b. Seriously Mentally Ill	46			
c. Chronic Substance Abuse	40			
d. Veterans	9			
e. Persons with HIV/AIDS	0			
f. Victims of Domestic Violence	5			
g. Unaccompanied Youth (Under 18)	0			

**SECTION IV**  
**NON-HOUSING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

## SECTION IV: NON-HOUSING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Along with housing and homelessness, the Consolidated Plan must include a strategy to address Decatur's priority unmet non-housing community development needs. Other aspects of community development are vital in addressing the goal of developing a viable urban community by providing a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities for low and moderate-income persons.

Identification of priority community development needs was made through four principle methods:

- Consultation with representatives of various community and social service agencies
- Consultation with City staff from various departments and divisions
- Citizen input through public workshops and survey responses
- Statistical data from sources such as Census, state agencies, etc.

Based on the information gathered, community development needs were given a priority rating of High, Medium, or Low. These ratings are listed on **Table 2B**, at the end of this Section. The following narrative discusses, in the order listed on Table 2B, those community development needs which received a "High" or "Medium" rating. A category may receive a "medium" or "low" priority rating even if the need is considered great, because other community resources are already being allocated to address it. Only those needs which the City intends to commit resources toward addressing over the next five years are designated "High" priority.

Over the next five years, the City anticipates addressing priority unmet non-housing community development needs through collaboration with other organizations, and in some cases through use of a portion of its annual CDBG allocation. Those needs which are anticipated to be addressed using federal funding are included in Section V., the Strategic Plan.

### A. Clearance and Demolition (HIGH)

The demolition of abandoned, unsafe and dilapidated structures is a **High** priority for the City of Decatur. This is due to the age and deteriorated condition of much of the housing stock, particularly in inner-city neighborhoods. These structures are not only a community eyesore but are a safety hazard and often become magnets for vandalism, arson, illegal activities and squatters. While no figures are available for the total number of vacant and dilapidated structures (residential and other) suitable for demolition (i.e., not suitable for rehabilitation and re-use), the Neighborhood Inspections Administrator estimates it to be several hundred.

Demolition of vacant and/or dilapidated structures has been a City priority over the past several years, with continued and increased local and CDBG funding being devoted to this in an effort to improve neighborhood safety and appearance. From 2005 through 2008, 146 abandoned,

substandard structures were demolished using CDBG funding. As of November 2009, there are 150 structures on the demolition list classified as “in process”, and 25 contracts “in the works”. It can take as little as 4 months or up to several years to complete the process from identification to actual demolition.

Demolition of vacant structures is commonly listed among the priority issues of neighborhood residents in community meetings, and was mentioned as a priority issues by several survey respondents.

### **B. Clearance of Contaminated Sites (HIGH)**

In the modern-day transition from a manufacturing to a service economy, Decatur has experienced population sprawl as new development activity grew to the outer metropolitan area, vacating many of the central-city neighborhoods. The City was once home to many agricultural product processors, foundries, metal processing operations, major rail lines, and associated rail and rail car repair operations and ancillary industries, such as railroad tie production, rail car manufacture, etc.

The exodus of industry, particularly from the City’s transportation corridors, has left large, blighted tracts of abandoned industrial properties with varying hazardous conditions affecting public health, safety, welfare, and environment. It is anticipated that former foundries and the heavy rail presence will have left legacies of lead and metals contamination, at the very least. The City expects underground storage tanks and petroleum issues will be associated with the vacant gas stations sites scattered throughout the City’s urban core, and due to the long presence of industry in the City, many of the industrial and commercial structures are expected to have asbestos and lead-based paint concerns.

In 2007, the Division of Planning conducted an inventory of properties in a targeted area adjacent to the City’s transportation corridors. The survey listed 114 sites as potential Brownfields. These sites range in size from small former corner gas stations to former foundries of over one hundred acres. The Division of Planning and Sustainability is currently seeking a grant from the U.S. EPA to further assess these sites and identify which are Brownfields. Once this is completed, the sites will be prioritized and funding for clean-up and preparation for re-use of the sites will be sought. This process will be a **High** priority for the City in the next few years.

### **C. Code Enforcement (HIGH)**

As discussed more fully in the Housing Market Analysis section of this document, due to the age of Decatur’s housing stock and the City’s demographic profile the condition of housing in many inner-city neighborhoods is severely deteriorated. For instance, from May 2008 to April 2009 City staff conducted 5,442 housing code inspections and abated 387 violations. For this reason, code enforcement has and will continue to be a **High** priority for the City. Continued code enforcement is one of the primary ways the City is able to provide a suitable living environment

and improve the quality of its neighborhoods. Code enforcement is commonly listed among the priority issues of neighborhood residents in community meetings, and was mentioned as a priority issues by several survey respondents, especially in regard to rental housing.

## **D. Public Facilities**

### **1. Neighborhood Facilities (MEDIUM)**

The residential portion of the Wabash Crossing redevelopment project is complete; however, a "Wabash Towne Center" is still planned at the former Longview administrative office site. This is envisioned to serve the surrounding residential neighborhood and may include retail, service, and community center facilities. Completion of the Wabash Towne Center is a goal of the DHA and the City, and will probably involve use of tax credits, possibly in conjunction with other funding sources.

### **2. Parks and/or Recreation Facilities (MEDIUM)**

Decatur seems adequately supplied by neighborhood recreational facilities, which are under the control of the Decatur Park District, a separate governmental entity. However, an aspect of parks and recreation in which the City has recently become involved is pedestrian walkways and bikeways. Provision of additional and/or improved bicycle and pedestrian opportunities is seen not only as a recreational asset, but also as a way to prevent obesity and improve public health, decrease energy dependence, and improve the desirability of neighborhoods. The need to extend additional pedestrian/bicycle routes to underserved parts of the City was expressed by residents at a public meeting and in citizen surveys, and creating a more pedestrian-friendly environment is emphasized in the 2009 Macon County & Decatur Comprehensive Plan.

A disturbing trend in children under 19 years of age is the decline of walking or biking and lack of physical activity in general, which may lead to childhood obesity. A team comprised of the City of Decatur, Decatur Public School District #61, Macon County Public Health Department, Decatur Park District, and CONO is embarking on a major initiative to encourage walking and biking safely to and from schools for the Decatur children in grades K-8. In August 2009, the City was awarded \$89,843 by the Illinois Department of Transportation's Safe Routes to School program to enable and encourage local students to walk and bike to school. The funds will be used to improve the walking conditions within a mile and half of William Harris Elementary School, within the designated Weed and Seed project area, by repairing and replace sidewalks, installing new signage and using speed feedback trailers to reduce the speed of vehicular traffic. A school zone enforcement squad will be in operation around the school to improve safety while a grant-funded walking school bus program will encourage the more kids to walk to school. The City will continue to administer this grant and work with the team to pursue additional funding opportunities.

### **3. Asbestos Removal (MEDIUM)**

As discussed, the demolition of vacant, abandoned and substandard residential and non-residential structures is a high housing and community development priority. While asbestos removal itself has not been identified as a high community need, it is an important aspect of every demolition project. An asbestos survey is completed by a professional asbestos abatement contractor on every structure before demolition, and the findings are incorporated into the bid packet for the demolition contract. The demolition contractor hires their own licensed abatement contractor to handle the removal of asbestos prior to demolishing the building. Cost of these projects may range from \$100 to \$3500.

The City has identified two deteriorated non-residential structures which may require demolition in the next few years and which are likely to require asbestos abatement. The abandoned Roach School on the City's east side is likely to require demolition, and the EPA has estimated that asbestos abatement may cost approximately \$500,000. There is also a deteriorated, structurally unsafe parking garage in the downtown area which is likely to be demolished, requiring an asbestos survey and probably abatement. Other structures which may be identified for demolition in the next few years may also require asbestos abatement.

### **4. Non-Residential Historic Preservation (MEDIUM)**

There are several important, historically identified districts in Decatur. Within these districts, several landmarks can be found. Nationally recognized are the Decatur, the Decatur Downtown, and the West End Historic Districts. Locally recognized are the Near West and the Macon Place Historic Districts. Refer to *Appendix C* for a map of Decatur's national and local historic districts. Fine examples of structures that hold local, county, state, and a national significance also exist outside these districts and throughout Decatur.

The purpose of Decatur's historic district program is to encourage the preservation, conservation, restoration, and rehabilitation of historically and architecturally significant areas of the city and individual buildings. Historic district designation enhances property values and helps to safeguard the heritage of the community for the education, pleasure, and enrichment of all citizens. Historic district designation does not affect the underlying zoning use of a property as established by the City of Decatur's Zoning Ordinance.

Decatur's approach is based on the premise that the historic district neighborhoods can and should be growing, vital, and vibrant places to live, work, and congregate. Decatur's historic districts are generally comprised of three types of buildings: Residential (Single family homes, apartment buildings, condominiums, and duplexes); Non Residential (Institutional: Churches, Academic Facilities, Commercial, and Industrial); and Non-Contributing (those buildings categorized as not contributing architecturally in relation to the history and architecture of the

district). While each of these building types is different, they each exist within a locally designated historic district and share the goal of maintaining and preserving the character and spirit of the historic neighborhood.

The **Historical and Architectural Sites Commission (HASC)** is a City administered program which provides guidelines and rulings for the appropriate measures to preserve historic neighborhood features such as large mature trees, tree lined streets, retaining walls, fencing, and infrastructure features such as brick streets and decorative street lighting. In striving to preserve the streetscape, tree canopy, brick streets etc. of a neighborhood, the objective of preserving the historic character of the district and the spirit of the neighborhood is achieved. Administered by HASC, historic preservation has become a program which provides activities for citizens such as awards programs, workshops, and newsletters. Funding for HASC includes the aforementioned as well as training, advertising, printing, postage, and other activities as necessary to support the goals and objectives of the Commission.

### **E. Infrastructure (MEDIUM)**

In recent years, the City has allocated CDBG funds to sidewalk, curb and gutter replacement and accessibility improvements (sidewalk ramps) in low-income neighborhoods. In 2009, Decatur was awarded \$407,376 under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) for public infrastructure improvements. 99% of these "CDBG-R" funds have been allocated to replace deteriorated and/or hazardous sidewalks and sidewalk ramps in the "Weed & Seed" project area. The City anticipates replacing close to 35,000 square feet of sidewalk and ramps in the targeted area.

However, another infrastructure need that has been identified but not addressed for several years is drainage and sewer lines. In the 1970's, Decatur replaced many of the combined sewer/stormwater lines in the oldest part of the City. But residential neighborhoods on what was then the urban fringe, which are now up to fifty years old, still have combined sewer and storm water lines that are obsolete, leaking and inadequate. The result is that many homes experience drain overflow and sewer backups during even minor rain events. Refer to *Appendix C* for a map of the location of sewer backup complaints received by the Citizens Response System since 1993 (after the last improvements were completed). Sewer/drainage problems were identified by the Director of Public Works as the highest priority infrastructure need. This was confirmed by the comments of several citizens in the survey forms and at public meetings.

In spite of the seriousness of this need, no funding is currently available to address it. Due to Decatur's current budget condition, sufficient local funding for a project of this magnitude is not available. The Illinois Revolving Loan Fund has been depleted due to the number of projects being undertaken using ARRA funds which needed additional matching funds.

The Director of Public Works recommends two possible ways to address this identified need. The first would be to prioritize neighborhoods and completely replace the current drainage system. These areas have been prioritized in the City's June 2009 "Stormwater Master Plan – Phase I Update (*see map, Appendix C*). At least one of the prioritized areas – Nelson Park, ranked second – is a low-income neighborhood. This is the preferred solution but is very costly.

A second, "stop-gap" solution is installing an overhead sewer system in individual homes which are experiencing the worst flooding problems. The City currently has a program to assist homeowners by providing 75% of the funding for overhead sewer system installation. However, homeowners must pay 25% of the cost (approximately \$1,250) themselves, and many low-income homeowners are unable to afford even the 25% match. However, qualified low-income homeowners are eligible to apply for the City's Emergency Program to address sanitation problems.

## **F. Public Services**

Decatur is well served by a variety of public and social service agencies, faith-based groups, and governmental units which provide public services to its residents. The priority areas discussed below were identified through consultation with agency and community representatives, citizen survey respondents, public meetings, and other sources.

A more comprehensive documentation of community public service needs is available from the **United Way of Decatur and Mid-Illinois**, which completed a *Survey of Unmet Community Needs* in January 2005. This survey identified job creation as the highest priority, followed by affordable health care, public schools, youth at risk and dental care. Using this Survey, the United Way now funds local service agencies according to three need areas: youth development, community basics for underserved populations, and access to healthcare. A new Survey of Unmet Needs is currently underway and should be completed in spring 2010. The new Survey is expected to be more thorough than the current one, using "asset mapping" to cover all needs including those currently being met. It is anticipated that when completed, the finding of this Survey will be incorporated into this Consolidated Plan, and priority needs will be re-aligned as necessary to insure consistency.

### **1. Senior Services (MEDIUM)**

While Decatur appears to be adequately served by its existing public facilities for seniors, the need for additional public services is a **Medium** priority. According to the 2006 ACS estimates, 16.3% of Decatur's population is age 65 or over, and 24.9% is age 45-64, with a median age of 38.5. According to population projections prepared by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, the total population of Macon County is projected to grow to 119,693 by 2030, and the population 60 years of age and older is projected to grow to 33,243, an increase of 10,825 (+48%).

On October 1, 2009 the **Macon County Senior Coalition** prepared a report entitled "*The Maturing of Illinois: Macon County*" was in partnership with the East Central Illinois Area on Aging. Along with housing-related issues (discussed in the Housing Needs section of this document), the report identifies other priority service needs of seniors. In particular, a need was identified for improved access to transportation services, particularly in rural areas of Macon County. The **Rural Public Transportation Initiative** has been developed to identify funds and establish agreements to expand public transit systems to rural communities outside the Decatur Transit District. This is a high priority need; however, it is primarily outside the Decatur corporate limits.

The report identifies **housing** as one of the two priority issues, along with transportation. In particular, the need for home rehabilitation, security, energy-efficiency, and modification assistance. Along with the need for financial assistance programs to complete repairs, the report cites a need for *better dissemination of information about existing programs, for a "clearinghouse" of information about reputable contractors for seniors to contact for home repair, and for programs to assist with routine or seasonal maintenance chores*. Other specific housing needs mentioned in the community needs assessment portion of the report were single-family senior living center, affordable assisted living facilities, assisted living facilities with dementia care, nursing homes with add-on apartments, and supportive living facilities.

Several survey responses received from area citizens and organizations mention the needs of seniors, including: programs for seniors; transportation and services for the elderly; affordable and accessible housing and transportation for older adults; "assistance with medication management and money management for older adults to enable them to live at home with independence and dignity"; "all the services need to be continued as Decatur prepares to meet the needs of the aging population in Macon County"; support for home delivered meals for older adults; improve public awareness of community services for older adults", "increase support for community programs on aging serving older adults, persons with disabilities, caregivers, and grandparents in Decatur and Macon County".

With the severe cuts to State funding, including funds disbursed through the East Central Illinois Agency on Aging, staff and services offered by the Decatur-Macon County Senior Center and other services to seniors are being reduced. Ways to supplement funding for these services is needed. The City does contribute local funds annually to help support the Decatur-Macon County Senior Center.

Decatur has a large number of public, non-profit, and faith-based organizations which serve the elderly population including Community Home Environmental Learning Project (CHELP), Starting Point - the Aging and Disability Resource Center at the Macon County Health Department, Community Health Improvement Center (CHIC), Decatur Macon County

Opportunities Corporation (DMCOC), Catholic Charities, Decatur-Macon County Senior Center, Meals on Wheels, and the Decatur Park District.

## **2. Youth Services (MEDIUM)**

Decatur appears to be adequately served by its existing public facilities for youth (including those at schools, churches, and non-profits, and community centers), and has many existing youth programs and services. However, the need for additional/increased services for area young people is designated as a **Medium** priority. This was a priority need identified in the United Way's January 2005 "Survey of Unmet Community Needs" (job creation rated highest priority followed by affordable health care, public schools, youth at risk and dental care). From this Survey, the United Way now funds agencies according to three need areas: youth development, community basics for underserved populations, and access to healthcare.

Youth is also a major focus of Decatur's **Weed and Seed Project**, funded in 2007 by the U.S. Department of Justice and concentrating on three inner city neighborhoods. Weed and Seed youth programs include truancy court at Stephen Decatur Middle School and McArthur High School and peer jurors at MacArthur High School.

One of the primary initiatives of the Decatur Community Foundation is the **Decatur Area Education Coalition (DAEC)**, a group of concerned business, education, government, and community representatives which has been meeting regularly to address the serious education issues facing Decatur's youth. The DAEC has established three teams: (1) Kindergarten readiness, (pre-K), (2) at or above grade level (gr. 1-8), and (3) job readiness (high school). Literacy is identified as a major continuing need at all levels, especially in team 2. The primary need for the older youth, team 3, is critical thinking and job skills. The DAEC has applied for grant from State Farm for a college and career center to serve this group. , Illinois Student Assistance Commission. If funded, this project will require seed money from the community.

**YouthBuild**, currently under the Department of Labor, is a highly successful alternative education program that assists youth who are often significantly behind in basic skills, in obtaining a high school diploma or GED credential. The primary target populations for YouthBuild are adjudicated youth, youth aging out of foster care, out-of-school youth, and other at-risk populations. YouthBuild has a very serious commitment to high performance and over the thirteen years that YouthBuild program has been part of HUD, they have achieved impressive outcomes with the most at-risk youth. The Macon County Health Department (MCHD) has initiated an effort to explore funding opportunities for the Youthbuild Program. The MCHD invited representatives from various services agencies, housing organizations, educational institutions, as well as the trades and labor to collaborate toward this effort to secure Youthbuild dollars for the community. This group intends to apply for future dollars to address the needs the target populations when funding becomes available.

Several survey responses mentioned the need for youth services, including recreation opportunities and education workshops for youth, "focus on more activities for the youth in the inner-city", "addressing the needs of the at-risk youth in this community"; "educational programs that can promise students a job once they receive their degree or certification", "fund after school programs for children, but require the users of these funds to coordinate their efforts instead of competing for limited resources". One resident said:

*I'm also concerned that we make sure kids in the worst parts of town are included. I think if we bring them into positive activities we lessen the crimes that make these areas not the choice places to live in.*

Community resources providing youth services include Decatur Public School District 61, Project Success, Youth with a Positive Direction, Boys & Girls Club, Decatur Park District, YMCA, Partners in Education, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Homework Hangout, and the Youth Advocate Program.

### **3. Transportation Services (MEDIUM)**

Service providers and survey respondents have expressed a need for accessible and affordable transportation services that will enable citizens access to jobs, education, and training opportunities. Also discussed is the need for a coordinated transportation service to enable recipients to receive services from a variety of providers in a timely coordinated fashion. Limited busing routes and schedules may prohibit persons from being able to attend evening classes at Richland Community College and/or seek employment opportunities outside the service area and/or hours. One citizen's comments were as follows:

*I believe that our City lags in its provision of transportation services. Many entry-level jobs require that an employee work third shift. Without personal transportation these individuals are dependent on public transportation and it is not available at those hours. Taxis are not viable due to the overall cost. Furthermore, people with disabilities are even further limited because our public transportation system does not run during evening or night hours and is stretched to provide safe transport for people in motorized chairs or scooters, both of which will only increase in usage as our population ages.*

Transportation services are provided by several organizations to assist their program participants in accessing services rendered by their agency. DMCOCC and Catholic Charities offers transportation services directly to their program participants. Walker's Limousine Service receives funding from the Illinois Department of Public Health, to provide transportation to individuals who receive Medicaid. This service transports individuals to various medical appointments.

The City of Decatur's Public Transit service is the means of public transportation for the general population with limited transportation. However, hours have been drastically reduced with service ending at 7:15 p.m. during the week and no service on Sundays. This has impacted the lower income residents who have second or third shift position. Reduced fares are available to District 61 high school students and to clients of many social service organizations. By state law, senior citizens and the disabled ride free. However, demand for free or reduced fare opportunities often far exceeds availability.

#### **4. Employment/Training Services (HIGH)**

While Decatur is certainly not alone in experiencing the effects of the current national economic recession, its jobless rate has been among the nation's highest. In September 2009, Decatur's jobless rate was 12.4% according to the Illinois Department of Employment Security statistics. This was one of the highest rates in the State of Illinois, the highest for the month in Decatur since 1982, and a 7.3% increase from September 2008. As the economy improves overall Decatur's unemployment rate is likely to decline – already the rate is down from 13.7% in July, when it was the second highest in the State. However, due to the high reliance on the manufacturing sector an increase in employment and training services may be needed to train workers for new job opportunities. For instance, some non-manufacturing sectors reported stable or increasing jobs in September including education, leisure and hospitality, healthcare and social assistance. For this reason, employment and training receive a **High** priority rating.

Consultations with area social service agencies confirm the effect that job loss/unemployment is having on the community. For instance, First Call for Help reported that job loss has led to more calls from people they have never heard from before, including a large number of calls regarding evictions and difficulty paying power bills. A rental agency reported a higher number of evictions and vacancies than they've ever seen, and attributed this to job loss. A credit counseling agency, CIDMCE, has had a great rise in clients lately, up from 2/day to 4/day plus 2 Saturdays a month, many of whom are referred to them due to bankruptcies and by lenders for foreclosures default. Dove, Inc. reports that they have already taken about 600 applications for short-term rental/utility assistance through the HPRP program. Service agencies report an increased need by the working class/lower middle class who are not eligible for publicly-funded social services like mental health/substance abuse counseling, but do not have private insurance and cannot pay for services because they do not have a job.

To address Decatur's critical need for jobs and employment/training services, the **Decatur Jobs Council (DJC)** was formed in 2005. The DJC is an interagency coordinating entity consisting of all Decatur area organizations that provide low-income and multiple-barrier families and individuals with employment-related services. Its mission is to remove barriers to employment for low-income/disadvantaged individuals through support services and collaborative

partnerships, utilizing effective pipelines to gainful employment and systems advocacy to ensure a strong workforce that meets the needs of the business community.

In November 2009, the DJC convened a community meeting to identify employment needs and strategies to address them. A preliminary report of these findings identified the following “challenges”:

- A lack of skills and education among job-seekers—especially basic skills and basic education and “soft” skills related to the workplace (such as work ethic, attitude, appearance or the ability to get along with others);
- Problems facing people with criminal backgrounds in securing employment;
- Not enough training programs in the area;
- Communication including lack of access to, or knowledge of, workforce development resources and information; lack of information about jobs; and lack of information about training resources for both individuals and employers;
- Need for communitywide business development, especially for smaller businesses; and a need to attract new businesses and focus on good-paying jobs;
- Need for highly-trained workforce to attract business;
- Limited employer involvement in workforce development strategies
- A need to focus on trying to keep young people in Decatur and to promote Decatur and its assets in order to avoid losing talented people to other communities;
- A mismatch between existing skills in the workforce and the jobs that are or will be available.

In 2009, Decatur applied for a “**Pathways Out of Poverty**” grant through the U.S. Department of Labor to retrain workers for emerging jobs in green industries. This project would be managed by Workforce investment Solutions and provide training for 120 participants and place graduates in skilled occupations. While the application was not accepted in the current funding round, it is expected to be re-submitted.

A related issue is adult literacy. Decatur has a program called **Project READ** which serves adults who wish to improve reading skills and/or math skills in order to obtain a GED, get better jobs, take college classes, help their children with homework or read the notes sent home from teachers. Project READ partners with other local service and employment training agencies including WorkForce Investment Solutions, allowing a large number of displaced workers to begin taking college courses after increasing their literacy skills. Because of the high number of adults residing in Decatur with low literacy skills, effective programs and resources are needed for these adults to receive adequate help.

Employment and training concerns were one of the most-mentioned categories in survey responses. Primary issues mentioned included education & training, unemployment, job preparation and job readiness through supportive and referral services, job opportunities and support services that assist with this, job training and education for persons with limited education/training, economic development/jobs, and livable wage. Some other comments are as follows:

*I believe that we must concentrate on employment issues. This must be addressed in a multi-tiered approach that supports the businesses already here, attracts new businesses to the area and provides a viable work force upon which they all may draw. By viable, I believe that potential workers must have a stronger skill set development, whether academic or technical training and that reliable transportation needs to be available around the clock to enable a larger population to get to and from work during all shifts.*

*Obviously, employment increases are needed. If people are working they feel better and there is less crime, less need for charity, etc. etc. etc.*

*I think we need to help people find employment to help themselves. When people have marketable skills, through job training, it makes them feel better about themselves. When they feel better about themselves they are more eager to be productive. They will then go out to find work. If we need to do anything it's help people get the skills they need to compete in a free market. Stop giving people a handout & start giving them a helping hand to be productive on their own.*

#### **5. Health Services (MEDIUM)**

While Decatur is well served by health service agencies, this is an ongoing need. Availability and affordability of health services to the low income population has become a major concern in recent years due to State budget cuts and changes in the way the State reimburses agencies for services. For instance, Heritage Behavioral Health Center lost considerable funding from the State in 2009, and at least 30% of their budget is state funded. A major obstacle is the change to a fee-for-service basis in state funding (with no payment unless a service can be billed to a specific client), so Heritage has had to change its way of providing some services to outreach rather than having staff based at sites. This has been a significant change over the last two years in the way their service is provided and in the amount of service, and the situation is not expected to improve. This funding change has also resulted in a greater need in the working class/lower middle class population, who are no longer eligible for publicly-funded services as state funding becomes available to a narrower segment of the population.

The Director of the Macon County Health Department (MCHD) recommends that a primary focus of health care be **prevention** as this has proven to be more cost-effective. A study by Trust

for America's Health entitled "Prevention for a Healthier America" found that investing \$10 per person per year in proven community-based programs to increase physical activity, improve nutrition, and prevent smoking and other tobacco use could save the country more than \$16 billion annually within five years. MCHD completed a cost benefit analysis which clearly indicated that prevention is much more cost effective than treatment. Preventive care offered by the MCHD includes flu shots, lead assessments of homes, HIV prevention education, home medication management for the elderly, etc.

Affordable dental and eye care, affordable home health care services (which are not covered by Medicare or Medicaid), and affordable counseling services were also listed as needs within the community. In DMCOC's *Community Action Plan for January 2010 through December 2010*, clients ranked health care (preventative and low cost health care/affordable dental care/immunizations/prescription assistance) ninth in the list of priority needs, while the Board and staff ranked this second.

Regarding **mental health**, the Macon County Mental Health Board coordinates a community forum every three years to prioritize unmet needs in the mental health arena. The most recent "*Focus on the Future*" was held January 19, 2010. If available, the priority mental health needs identified at the community forum will be incorporated into this document.

Organizations in Decatur which address health and mental care concerns of the low-income population include the Macon County Health Department, Community Health Improvement Center (CHIC), Heritage Behavioral Health Center, Planned Parenthood, Decatur Memorial Hospital, and St. Mary's Hospital.

#### **6. Lead Hazard Screening (MEDIUM)**

Due to the age and condition of Decatur's housing stock, home assessments for lead-based paint hazards and testing of children for elevated blood lead levels continue to be a **Medium** priority. The Macon County Health Department is the sole agency responsible for facilitating the lead screening program throughout Macon County since the inception of the Illinois Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program in 1993. While it has had a significant impact in increasing public awareness of lead hazards and reducing home lead hazards, the need remains.

According to data provided by the Macon County Health Department (MCHD), 2,583 lead screenings were conducted in 2008 and 291 home lead assessments were completed. There were 34 confirmed cases of elevated blood levels, 54 home visits and 15 homes were referred to the Environmental Health Division for mitigation due to the presences of children with elevated blood lead levels. MCDH anticipates continuing to conduct lead inspections, testing and follow-up. However, it will be difficult to continue this program due to State's change to fee-for-service funding which does not cover the cost for case management, which is time consuming. It is also

the policy of the Health Department to educate their clients on lead hazards and to inform them of proper nutrition for children, good housekeeping practices, and current regulations for abatement.

In 2003, the Macon County Health Department and the City of Decatur formed a partnership and became funding recipients of the Get The Lead Out Program provided by the Illinois Department of Public Health (further discussion is provided in Section II.B.6). However, this program is expected to be discontinued when the current funding is expended.

#### **7. Crime Awareness and Prevention (HIGH)**

Crime prevention was one of the primary concerns mentioned in community meetings and surveys. Gangs and drug trafficking were the issues of most concern, and are considered to have a major negative impact on several inner-city neighborhoods.

Decatur's neighborhood organizations come together through the **Coalition of Neighborhood Organizations (CONO)** to discuss neighborhood issues including crime awareness. In cooperation with the City and with Dove, Inc., neighborhood organizations are encouraged to build neighborhood watch groups, block captains, etc. CONO and the City co-sponsor National Night Out, an annual national crime prevention event.

One of Decatur's primary crime prevention programs is **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)**, through which low-income homeowners may be provided with home safety and security improvements.

An approach that has shown promise in increasing crime awareness and prevention is **Weed and Seed**. In 2007, Decatur was selected by the U.S. Department of Justice as a "Weed and Seed" site. This program is designed to assist communities struggling with persistent high levels of serious violent crime and corresponding social problems. The Weed & Seed partnership requires the community's residents to work with civic leaders, business owners, churches, schools and service programs as a steering committee to design a comprehensive plan to reduce crime and improve the quality of life.

The designated "**Decatur Near North Side Weed and Seed Program**" encompasses an area bounded by McKinley Street, Eldorado Street, Illinois Route 48, and the ICG railroad tracks (see map in *Appendix C*). It is overseen by a steering committee and staffed by a Site Coordinator. The Site Coordinator's main role is collaboration with other agencies and the police, holding informational meetings, linking people with services etc.

The Program received \$175,000 in 2007, the first year of the 5-year program, but was reduced to \$150,000 in year 2 and \$142,000 in the current year. Funding is anticipated to be further reduced

to \$100,000 next year and \$75,000 in 2011, the final year of the grant. Along with funding the Site Coordinator, the grant also funds part-time overtime funds for police in the Weed & Seed area. It also paid for four video cameras in high crime areas and for a police bike patrol. The Site Coordinator believes the grant has been useful in concentrating resources, building relationships with law enforcement (including police, the States Attorney's office and judges). She believes this collaboration was instrumental in the receipt by Youth with a Positive Direction (YWPD), a neighborhood youth organization, of a state Safety Net grant this year. Along with working with law enforcement, youth is a major focus of the Weed & Seed partnership including service to local high schools (truancy court and peer jurors programs). The Site Coordinator works with three area neighborhood organizations and with various other youth, faith-based and service agencies.

Included in *Appendix C* are maps depicting the number of selected crimes (weapon offenses, drug offences, aggravated assaults, and burglaries) in FY2008 within the urban core area. These maps show that while the Weed and Seed program area has a relatively percentage of these crimes, other neighborhoods are facing similar challenges. It has been recommended that aspects of the Weed and Seed approach be extended to other high-crime areas of the inner-city in an effort to address this High Priority need.

#### **8. Fair Housing Activities (MEDIUM)**

As part of this Consolidated Plan process, the City of Decatur has updated its *Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing* (included in Section VI.G.). In discussing this update with the Fair Housing Committee, it was determined that fair housing activities and public awareness of fair housing rights should remain a **Medium** priority. On-going concerns which the Fair Housing Committee will continue to address include: persons with a fair housing complaint may not know what to do or where to go; renters may be unaware of their fair housing and tenants' rights; there is a perception that "racial steering" to certain neighborhoods still occurs; some landlords are unwilling to rent to people who are Section 8 eligible, or who are Social Security or SSDI recipients; and minorities are underrepresented in homeownership and may feel a lack of homeownership opportunities. The Fair Housing Committee is planning a housing fair for spring 2009 to increase public awareness.

#### **9. Tenant Landlord Counseling (HIGH)**

The highest priority need area identified in this Consolidated Plan was the needs of low and very low-income renters. One subarea of this is a **High** priority need for tenant-landlord counseling services. This need was mentioned at community meetings, in citizen surveys, and in consultations with various agencies. Decatur currently does not have any agency providing this service. The City's Human Relations Officer fields numerous calls on this topic. Other social service agencies do their best to provide answers. The United Way's First Call for Help service

receives calls each month from renters facing eviction with questions about their rights. Landlords, too, are often faced with problem tenants and need to know their rights.

The Decatur Fair Housing Committee has held occasional workshops to provide information on tenant/landlord rights, and has produced a handbook which is available at the City offices, public library and other locations. However, additional resources are needed. The City funded a tenant counseling program in FY05, and has budgeted \$20,000 of its FY09 CDBG allocation to assist in providing this service, but has not yet expended the funds.

#### **10. Other services: Homeowner Counseling (MEDIUM)**

With the current high foreclosure rate and the difficulties faced by first-time and low-income homebuyers, homeownership counseling services are a **Medium** priority need. Decatur is fortunate to have two HUD-certified home counseling agencies, CIDCME and "Welcome Home", to address this need. Both have seen an increase in the number of clients facing foreclosure who have been referred by their lenders. Assistance earlier in the foreclosure process might help additional families to keep their homes. Improving the creditworthiness of potential homebuyers through education is especially needed. Public information about existing homeowner counseling services and educational programs could be of assistance; however, the agencies do not currently have the time or resources to conduct community outreach programs.

As the housing market improves and lenders relax their credit requirements, it is anticipated that more low-income families may consider homeownership using downpayment assistance programs. These programs require homebuyer counseling services.

The City requires recipients of assistance through its Homebuyer Program to receive homeowner counseling prior to closing. It also participates on the Fair Housing Committee, which from time to time hosts housing fairs and workshops providing homeownership information, and is currently planning a housing fair for spring 2009.

#### **11. Other services: Homeless services (MEDIUM)**

Decatur prides itself on the level of support for its homeless population. The **Decatur/Macon County Continuum of Care** is a thriving partnership of governmental, service and faith-based organizations which has successfully worked together to increase emergency and permanent housing, facilities and services for the homeless. Due to the completion of a new facility for the Good Samaritan Inn (anticipated for occupancy in early 2010) and of the Salvation Army's new shelter, the development of additional new non-housing public facilities to serve the homeless is not currently considered a high priority need. Nevertheless, with current budget reductions and increased need due to unemployment and economic conditions, services for the homeless remains a **Medium** priority.

Non-housing services to the homeless include a wide range of activities such as meal provision, healthcare, mental illness and substance abuse case management, education, job training and life skills, etc. Many of these public services have been discussed elsewhere in this section.

One of the main service providers to the homeless in Decatur is **Heritage Behavioral Health Center**, which operates the **Oasis Day Center** and provides case management and outreach for mental illness/substance abuse issues. The unduplicated count of individuals served by Oasis has risen since 2004, when it served 693 individuals, to 1153 in 2009 (an average of 175/day). The peak was 1305 individuals served in 2008, the height of the current economic recession. Oasis is open 365 days a year as a drop-in shelter where clients can rest, do laundry, store their things, engage in activities, and be linked to services. A nurse practitioner and case manager from CHIC clinic is on-site once a week, and a Heritage case manager is available full time. The director of Oasis reports the following primary needs: more younger clients (age 18-25) who need basic skills and education, mental health services and behavioral management; prison re-entry clients who need assistance with re-integration and other services; dental health services; funding for prescription medications; and additional storage facilities.

Heritage lost a considerable amount of its State funding in the 2009 budget crisis, and at least 30% of its budget is state-funded. A major problem was the change to a fee-for-service basis in state funding, whereby no payment is received unless a service can be specifically billed. This has been a significant change in the way service is provided and the amount of service, and this situation is not expected to improve. This has led to a substantial reduction in funding for Oasis, which the community has been trying to replace by various fundraising activities.

**DMCOC** is a primary provider of emergency services to assist households facing homelessness. In 2008, it assisted 54 families with emergency shelter services, and 571 with emergency needs for prescriptions, bus tickets, meals and perishable food items, gas, etc.

Another primary service provider is the **Good Samaritan Inn**, which provides approximately 300 free hot lunches to homeless and at-risk persons daily. In 2009 the Good Samaritan Inn served a total of 99,528 meals, an increase of nearly 75% from the number served in 2004 (57,862) when records were first kept. Like Oasis, Good Samaritan Inn's peak attendance was in 2008 (101,345). In February 2010, Good Samaritan Inn moved from the storefront where it has resided since 1985 to a brand-new, 12,000-square-foot facility. The new facility seats 125 for lunch (from the current 54) and includes new cooking equipment and separate storage space. The entire \$2.1 million cost was raised locally from individual donors, churches, foundations, and businesses. The vision for the new facility is that it will be used not only for meals, but also as home to a variety of services for the homeless and at-risk including education and training, counseling, health services, etc.

One specific need that was identified is for increased **transportation assistance**. While several service agencies provide free Decatur Transit Authority bus tokens to get to doctor's appointments, job interviews, case management etc., the monthly allocation of tokens is often depleted well before the end of the month.

### **G. Economic Development (HIGH)**

As an older industrial center, Decatur has struggled with the nation's change from a manufacturing-based to a more service-oriented economy, and with the loss of retail establishments from its downtown to locations outside the City limits. However, Decatur has a number of positive economic features. As the global headquarters for food processing giant Archer Daniels Midland (ADM) and also to a major Tate and Lyle corn processing plant, Decatur has established itself as a center of the nations' agribusiness industry. It is also a regional healthcare center with two major hospitals, Decatur Memorial and St. Mary's, both of which have expanded in recent years. It is home to two thriving educational institutions, Millikin University and Richland Community College. Other major employers include Caterpillar Inc. and Mueller Industries Inc. Decatur's economy is becoming much more balanced and diversified: in July 2009, the top four employment areas by industry were trade, transportation and utilities (23%), manufacturing (19%), educational and health services (14.4%), and government (12%). Still, the transition has not been an easy one.

Due to the loss of manufacturing base, the current high unemployment rate, and the nation's current recession, economic development is **High** on the list of priority needs for many area residents. The high priority need for Employment and Training Services was discussed in the Public Services section of this document. However, many citizens also expressed a need for new job opportunities and businesses to improve the overall condition of Decatur. Comments included:

- *Bringing business to Decatur, not restaurants, stores, retail, etc. We need companies both small, medium, and large that include private entities as well as government offices to create a large job base. Once that is accomplished the restaurants, stores, and other retail will NATURALLY follow. Pushing for consumer product related business is putting the cart before the horse or trying to push a rope uphill.*
- *New business! We need to draw new businesses into Decatur. New business = higher employment = less crime!*
- *Jobs, Jobs, Jobs. Make companies offers they cannot refuse to locate their business in our town. We have far too many factories and warehouses sitting idle. We are in a prime location with interstates 72 and 51. We are within an hour from Springfield, Champaign and Bloomington. ... Everything seems to go in cycles, maybe it is time to try to get*

*some well know stores back downtown. ... Decatur needs to step up to the plate and try to lure some big retail to downtown.*

- *Give companies a reason to move to/stay in Decatur. Our economy is so depressed right now, people are leaving. Give them a reason to stay. Businesses employ citizens, who can then pay taxes & contribute to the economy.*

Based on this information, the City of Decatur may need to offer incentives in the way of infrastructure and property acquisition assistance to incent current employers to expand and potential new employers to locate to the City of Decatur.

### **1. Focus Areas**

Addressing Decatur's economic development needs will require partnerships with the Economic Development Corporation of Decatur and Macon County (EDC), the Metro Decatur Chamber of Commerce, other governmental units, and the private sector. Most of these efforts are not within the scope, eligibility or projected use of the City's CDBG and HOME funds. However, some areas which may pertain to this document and significantly impact the City's low income residents include:

#### ***a. Wabash Crossing***

The completion of the Wabash Crossing residential redevelopment project has left economic development needs and opportunities. Phase III of the residential development was completed on remaining infill sites from the prior phases. This leaves the vacant land that was formerly planned for Phase III available for other appropriate eligible uses. Various options are currently being considered including a site for a new police headquarters or high school.

A "Wabash Towne Center" is still planned at the former Longview administrative office site. This may include retail, service, and community center facilities. Completion of the Wabash Towne Center is a goal of the DHA and the City, and will probably involve use of tax credits, possibly in conjunction with other funding sources.

#### ***b. Downtown Decatur***

Revitalization of Decatur's downtown business district continues to be a City priority. The city is currently working with the Illinois Department of Transportation to re-designate Business Route 51 through downtown from being Class II designated truck route, thereby reducing traffic and making downtown more pedestrian-friendly. One block still remains vacant and available for redevelopment in the North Water TIF District. Other older commercial structures are in poor condition and may need to be considered for demolition, while other historic buildings may need financial assistance for renovation.

*c. Neighborhood Retail Centers*

In addition to downtown, Decatur has several older commercial centers which serve residents of its core area. The City will continue to actively pursue the redevelopment of existing Neighborhood Retail Centers with vacant store fronts that have fallen into disrepair and blight. The City is currently exploring a possible Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District for the blighted 50 year old Pines Shopping Center that would be anchored by a newly built Save-A-Lot grocery store. Redevelopment of these centers will help to stabilize the property values of the surrounding neighborhood while offering quality retail service for the neighborhood residents.

*d. Redevelopment of Contaminated Sites*

As discussed in *Section IV. B*, the exodus of industry, particularly from the City's transportation corridors, has left large, blighted tracts of abandoned industrial properties with varying hazardous conditions affecting public health, safety, welfare, and environment. The Division of Planning has conducted an inventory of properties in a targeted area adjacent to the City's transportation corridors, which listed 114 sites as potential Brownfields. These sites range in size from small former corner gas stations to former foundries of over one hundred acres. The Division of Planning and Sustainability is currently seeking a grant from the U.S. EPA to further assess these sites and identify which are Brownfields. Once this is completed, the sites will be prioritized and funding for clean-up and preparation for re-use of the sites will be sought.

*e. Sustainable Development*

In 2009, the City of Decatur received \$768,000 in **Energy Efficiency Community Development Block Grant funding** as part of the federal stimulus package. The City plans to use these funds on several new "green" projects including retrofitting of the Civic Center to make it more energy efficient, initiating a residential energy conservation program, and creating a communitywide sustainability plan. The plan will coordinate efforts between the various groups now working to make Decatur more environmentally friendly, addressing sustainable practices within city government facilities and throughout the community at large while identifying areas needing improvement. The following goals are to be achieved as part of the plan:

- Market and position Decatur as a green community and a hub for green economy
- Encourage innovative low impact development practices and sustainability through historic preservation measures
- Improve residential quality of life through exceptional sustainable programs
- Reduce costs and increase efficiency within public facilities
- Become a zero waste community
- Review and improve existing sustainable programs, such as the residential recycling program, to increase efficiency.

## **2. Economic Incentive Programs**

Other resources are available to address the need for economic development opportunities in Decatur. Working in partnership with the Economic Development Corporation of Decatur and Macon County (EDC) and the Metro Decatur Chamber of Commerce, the City of Decatur offers various incentive programs to spur employment growth for the region. Incentives available for business development include:

### ***a. Enterprise Zones***

The Decatur Enterprise Zone was established to encourage job creation and capital investment in areas of economic distress. The program is administered by the EDC. Decatur offers various tax credits, exemptions, deductions and property tax abatement for new and existing businesses located in geographic areas (Enterprise Zones) designated by the State of Illinois with local government cooperation. The incentives include investment tax credit, sales tax deduction, machinery and equipment sales tax exemption, utility tax exemption, jobs tax credit, and property tax incentives. A map of Decatur's enterprise zones is included in *Appendix C*.

### ***b. Decatur Revolving Loan Fund***

The Revolving Loan Fund is a low interest loan fund established by the EDC and the City of Decatur and managed by the Community Investment Corporation of Decatur (CICD) to assist project financing needs within the city limits of Decatur. The low interest loans range from \$10,000 to \$200,000.

### ***c. Tax Increment Financing Districts***

Infrastructure improvements and financing are available for qualified programs in established TIF districts primarily for commercial and retail development. The program is administered by the City of Decatur. The basis of tax increment as an economic development tool relies on the investment of private capital in an area, whereby new taxes are generated.

Decatur currently has four TIF districts: Olde Towne (downtown Decatur and corridor to the west), Wabash (northeast of downtown Decatur), Southeast Plaza (near Mt. Zion) and Eastgate Commons (just north of Southeast Plaza). A map of the existing TIF districts is included in *Appendix C*.

The Olde Towne TIF District has provided a means to extend downtown redevelopment to the Near West Neighborhood in order to create a corridor of activity between Millikin University and Downtown Decatur. Established in October of 1999, the TIF district has provided \$2.8 million in streetscape and infrastructure improvements along West Main Street. These improvements include landscaped boulevards, brick streets, a bike path, and sidewalk improvements. Phase II, which began in 2008, had provided \$2.3 million to extend these improvements to Fairview Avenue and included a \$1.5 million Enhancement Grant to improve pedestrian/bike safety, enhance site furniture such as lights, trash receptacles, and benches and to improve roadway conditions.

The Olde Towne TIF also provided funds to redevelop the 300 block of North Water Street for streetscaping and infrastructure improvements in support of a new, 3-story office/retail building by a private developer. This development turned a blighted city center block into a viable and profitable space. Currently \$200,000 is allocated for downtown commercial area restoration including code enforcement and upper story residential conversion. Future possibilities include extending new streetscape features, like that completed in the North Water Street area, throughout the downtown.

Additionally, the Olde Town TIF includes funding for residential rehabilitation in the Near West historic district. Along the West Main Street corridor it provided \$500,000 for improvements to residential structures which addressed code deficiency, exterior improvements, landscape improvements, and life safety issues. These funds were matched by the homeowners resulting in \$1 million of investment in less than a one mile corridor. Currently, this program includes an allocation of \$200,000 to expand out from West Street to anywhere within the TIF district. In the few short months in which it has been implemented, it has generated much interest and requests for funding.

The Wabash TIF was established to provide funding for infrastructure in support of the new Wabash Crossing residential development. This project is nearing completion.

Southeast Plaza and Eastgate Commons are outside the urban core and are strictly commercial projects in cooperation with private developers.

#### *d. Section 108 Loan Guarantee*

In 1995, the City of Decatur applied to participate in the **Section 108 Loan program**. The City was approved for reservations of \$2.5 million and \$6.0 million in Community Development Block Grant Section 108 loan guarantees. The \$2.5 million was used to establish a generic business loan program to spur development in the downtown area, since this area of the City was in need of substantial support for business development.

The Beresford Plaza project was the first to be funded from the generic downtown business Section 108 reservation. The project included acquisition and renovations to 101 South Main Place, a historic property located at the intersection of Main and Main Streets in the heart of downtown Decatur. The loan for the One Main Place project has a maturity date of April 1, 2019.

The City had accessed \$6.0 Million and an additional \$2.5 Million of Section 108 guaranteed loan funds to support infrastructure improvements in the Near North Redevelopment Area. The \$3 million Section 108 loan commitment for the Near North Redevelopment was utilized to fund infrastructure construction. The City has decided not to utilize the balance of Section 108 reserved funds for the area. Other funding sources may finance eligible development projects

that will generate new jobs. These funds could be utilized to finance projects to be carried out by neighborhood-based nonprofit organizations, private developers, Section 103(d), or specialized Small Business Investment Companies and local development corporations consistent with our five year goals and the goals of the Wabash Crossing HOPE VI revitalization project.

*e. New Markets Tax Credits*

The U.S. Treasury Department's New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) program, established by Congress in December 2000, permits individual and corporate taxpayers to receive a credit against federal income taxes for making equity investments in investment vehicles known as Community Development Entities (CDEs). The investor receives a credit totaling 39 percent of the cost of the investment. CDEs must apply to the Treasury's Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund, which administers the NMTC program, to compete for this allocation authority.

In conjunction with the EDC, Decatur applied for New Markets Tax Credits in 2009 to spur development in high poverty areas, but the application was not approved. The City plans to re-apply in the near future.

**Table 2B**  
**Priority Community Development Needs**

	Priority Need	Unmet	Dollars to	5 Yr	Annual	Percent
Acquisition of Real Property	L					
Disposition	L					
Clearance and Demolition	H					
Clearance of Contaminated Sites	H					
Code Enforcement	H					
Public Facility (General)						
Senior Centers	L					
Handicapped Centers	L					
Homeless Facilities	L					
Youth Centers	L					
Neighborhood Facilities	M					
Child Care Centers	L					
Health Facilities	L					
Mental Health Facilities	L					
Parks and/or Recreation Facilities	L					
Parking Facilities	L					
Tree Planting	L					
Fire Stations/Equipment	L					
Abused/Neglected Children Facilities	L					
Asbestos Removal	M					
Non-Residential Historic Preservation	M					
Other Public Facility Needs	L					
Infrastructure (General)						
Water/Sewer Improvements	M					
Street Improvements	M					
Sidewalks	M					
Solid Waste Disposal Improvements	L					
Flood Drainage Improvements	M					
Other Infrastructure	L					
Public Services (General)						
Senior Services	M					
Handicapped Services	L					
Legal Services	L					
Youth Services	M					
Child Care Services	L					
Transportation Services	M					
Substance Abuse Services	L					
Employment/Training Services	H					
Health Services	M					
Lead Hazard Screening	M					
Crime Awareness	H					
Fair Housing Activities	M					
Tenant Landlord Counseling	H					
Other Services (Homeowner counseling)	M					
Other Services (Homeless services)	M					
Economic Development (General)	H					
C/I Land Acquisition/Disposition	M					
C/I Infrastructure Development	M					
C/I Building Acq/Const/Rehab	L					
Other C/I	H					
ED Assistance to For-Profit	L					
ED Technical Assistance	L					
Micro-enterprise Assistance	L					
Other						

**SECTION V**  
**THE STRATEGIC PLAN**  
**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS**

## **SECTION V: THE STRATEGIC PLAN: OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS**

Based on the identified Housing and Homeless Needs, Housing Market Analysis and Non-housing Community Development Needs, the following **Priority Needs** have been determined. **Table 2A**, at the end of this Section, depicts the priority given to each category of unmet housing needs and investment plan goals. **Table 2B** depicts the priority determined for unmet non-housing community development needs.

The City of Decatur has developed the following strategy and specific objectives for the next five years. Objectives are categorized in **Transition Table 2C, Summary of Specific Housing/Community Development Objectives**, which has been modified to conform to the categories of Table 3A, Summary of Specific Annual Objectives: Rental Housing (RH), Owner Housing (OH), Homelessness (HL), Special Needs (SN), Community Development (CD), Infrastructure (I), Public Facilities (PF), Public Services (PS), Economic Development (ED), and Neighborhood Revitalization (NR). **Sections A through D** describe the specific objectives and actions that are planned to be taken using federal funds during the next five years to address identified unmet priority needs in each required plan area (**affordable housing, homelessness, special needs housing, and non-housing community development**). These objectives are not in any priority order. For each activity that will be addressed using federal funds, a rationale for the funding decision is given along with the source of funds, performance measure, and measurable outcome. The outcome/objective code is also listed, depicting the way the objective fulfills at least one of the National Objectives of decent housing, suitable living environment, or economic opportunity. Specific programs or unit totals may need to be revised over the course of this Plan term.

### **A. Affordable Housing**

#### **1. Rental Housing Objectives**

##### **Objective RH-1: Provide housing counseling services to low income renter households.**

While numerous programs, services and new housing opportunities have recently been or are currently being provided to address the needs of low income renters, one identified unmet need is for tenant counseling services to assist low-income renters in securing and maintaining decent, affordable rental housing.

*Actions planned to address this objective:* The City has set aside \$20,000 in FY09 CDBG to fund a program to provide counseling to low-income renters on tenant/landlord rights and responsibilities, pre- and post-rental counseling, budgeting, referral to appropriate services, case management, and other areas to improve the housing situation for this population group. Currently, all housing counseling is aimed toward homeownership. This program would be administered in cooperation with organizations which already deal with this population and these issues. If successful, the City would consider re-funding the program at a later date. *Funding*

*Source: CDBG Performance indicator: Households Expected number: 40 (av.10/year x 4 years)*  
*Outcome: DH-3, sustaining decent, affordable housing for low-income renters.*

**Objective RH-2: Provide additional affordable rental housing opportunities to meet a specific need.**

While additional affordable rental housing development is not currently identified as a need, the City is open to considering utilization of HOME funds, particularly in conjunction with other funding sources and other organizations, to assist in financing new affordable rental units to meet a specific identified community need. Examples could include infill development on vacant lots or rehabilitation of existing vacant structures by a CHDO or other housing organization. Some or all of these units could also benefit persons with special needs or permanent housing for the homeless (see objectives HL-4 and SN-1).

*Actions planned to address this objective:* None at this time, possible future allocation. *Funding source: HOME* (in conjunction with other public and/or private sources) *Performance indicator: Housing Units Expected number: 8 (av. 8 units x 1 year)* *Outcome: DH-1, additional available affordable housing for low-income renters.*

**Objective RH-3: Continue assisting low-income renters to sustain housing and prevent homelessness.**

In 2009, the City of Decatur received \$622,144 from HUD and through the federal *Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (HPRP)*. These funds were allocated to Dove, Inc. to provide short-term, emergency assistance to low-income households (under 50% MFI) for rent and utility assistance. The program serves eligible persons who would become homeless if not for the HPRP assistance (Prevention) or who are currently homeless (Rapid Re-housing). See Objective HL-3.

*Actions planned to address this objective:* The City will continue administering the 2009 HPRP until funds are expended, and will seek to obtain future funds if the program is renewed. Approximately **4 hours/week** of staff time is allocated to coordinating, administering and monitoring the 2009 HPRP grant. *Funding source: N/A* (currently 2009 HPRP) *Performance indicator: Households; persons Expected Number:* Approx. 480 households assisted over 2-year period *Outcome: DH-3, sustaining decent, affordable housing for low-income renters.*

## 2. Owner Housing Objectives

### **Objective OH-1: Improve existing housing conditions for low-income homeowners.**

The City intends to expend a large amount of its federal funds on programs to address this unmet community need, as few other resources are available for this population group. This not only improves living conditions for low income families, but also allows the elderly and persons with physical disabilities to continue living independently, improves energy efficiency, and improves the housing stock and living environment in the city's older neighborhoods. While the programs are offered city-wide, the majority will be within the Neighborhood Revitalization Area. Comments from citizens indicated that these programs have had a positive impact and should continue.

#### **Actions planned to address this objective:**

**1. Homeowner Housing Rehabilitation Program.** Continue the current homeowner housing rehabilitation assistance program, and refine as needed to increase effectiveness. This program brings housing units into full health and safety code compliance, increases energy efficiency, and mitigates lead paint hazards. *Funding Source: HOME Performance indicator: Housing Units Expected Number: 35* (av. 7/yr. x 5 yrs.) *Outcome: DH-3*, sustaining decent, affordable housing for low-income homeowners.

**2. Roof Program.** Continue this effective program, which addresses code violations on residential roofs, addresses related lead paint hazards, and also allows for addressing of emergency and accessibility needs. Available to qualified low-income households city-wide. *Funding Source: CDBG Performance indicator: Housing Units Expected Number: 40* (av. 8/yr. x 5 yrs.) *Outcome: DH-3*, sustaining decent, affordable housing for low-income homeowners.

**3. Emergency Program.** Continue this effective program which provides emergency housing repairs for low-income homeowners city-wide. Funds are used to address health or sanitation issues which are considered life threatening, and may incorporate energy-efficient systems. *Funding Source: CDBG Performance indicator: Housing Units. Expected Number: 45* (av. 9/yr. x 5 yrs.) *Outcome: DH-3*, sustaining decent, affordable housing for low-income homeowners.

**4. Residential Accessibility Program.** Continue funding for this effective program, which provides accessibility improvements (such as ramps, wider doorways, grab bars, etc.) for low-income homeowners with physical disabilities throughout the City. *Funding Source: CDBG Performance indicator: Housing Units. Expected Number: 25* (av. 5/year x 5 years) *Outcome:*

DH-3, sustaining decent, affordable housing for low-income homeowners and DH-3, increasing the number of accessible units.

**5. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Program.** Continue and expand this existing program, which provides safety improvements (such as new doors and lighting) for low-income homeowners throughout the City. *Funding Source: CDBG Performance indicator: Housing Units. Expected Number: 25* (av. 5/year x 5 years) *Outcome: DH-3, sustaining decent, affordable housing for low-income homeowners.*

**6. Energy Conservation Program.** Continue this existing program to provide energy conservation improvements to low income homeowners (such as storm windows, insulation, furnaces, water heaters, storm windows, etc.) citywide. May also mitigate lead paint hazards and address emergency and accessibility needs. *Funding Source: CDBG Performance indicator: Housing Units. Expected Number: 30* (av. 6/year x 5 years) *Outcome: DH-3, sustaining decent, affordable housing for low-income homeowners.*

**Objective OH-2: Provide financial assistance to low income first-time homebuyers.**

While there are other financial programs to assist low-income first-time homebuyers in Decatur, funds are often depleted well before the need is met and they are only offered in conjunction with certain financial institutions. The City's Homebuyer Program has the added benefits of requiring full health and safety code compliance and mitigation of lead paint hazards thereby improving the affordable housing stock, and requiring the purchaser to complete a HUD-certified counseling program.

*Actions planned to address this objective: Decatur First Time Homebuyer Program.* Continue this effective program to assist low-income first-time homebuyers in cooperation with local lending institutions. Refine and adapt program guidelines as needed to increase the program's effectiveness. *Funding Source: HOME Performance indicator: Households Expected Number: 25* (av. 5/year x 5 years) *Outcome: DH-2, increasing the affordability of decent housing for low-income households.*

**Objective OH-3: Provide new home ownership opportunities for low income households.**

*Actions planned to address this objective:*

**1. CHDO Program.** The City's annual allocation of HOME funds to a CHDO(s) typically is used for development of new or substantially rehabilitated existing vacant units to provide new affordable for-purchase housing for low-income households. The City will continue funding of

qualified projects by certified CHDOs through an annual competitive proposal process, for development of new or substantially rehabilitated existing vacant units to provide new affordable for-purchase or lease-to-purchase housing for low-income households. **Funding Source:** HOME **Performance indicator:** Housing Units **Expected Number:** 10 (av. 2 units/year x 5 years) **Outcome:** DH-1, increasing the supply and availability of affordable, decent housing for low-income households.

2. Possible future allocation of funds to assist a nonprofit or development organization(s) to develop affordable ownership housing for low-income households. While additional affordable for-purchase housing development is not currently identified as a priority need, the City is open to considering utilization of HOME funds, particularly in conjunction with other funding sources and organizations, to assist in financing new affordable units to meet a specific identified community need such as new accessible/adaptable, single-story homes or condominiums, or infill development on vacant lots. This could include new or rehabilitated existing vacant structures. **Funding Source:** HOME **Performance indicator:** Housing Units. **Expected Number:** 4 (av. 4 units x 1 year) **Outcome:** DH-1, increasing the supply and availability of affordable, decent housing for low-income households.

## **B. Homelessness**

The City's strategy to address homelessness in Decatur is outlined in **Section III**. Below are only those specific objectives for which federal funding is anticipated to be used.

### **Objective HL-1: Continue to coordinate with homeless service providers and other organizations to educate the public about homelessness.**

*Actions planned to address this objective:* Approximately **1 hour/week** of staff time is allocated to participate in meetings and activities of the Macon County Homeless Advisory Council, the Working Group on Chronic Homelessness, and other homeless service provider organizations. **Funding Source:** CDBG **Outcome:** DH-3, increasing the sustainability of decent housing.

### **Objective HL-2: Continuing to support the Homeward Bound transitional housing program.**

*Actions planned to address this objective:* Approximately **1 hour/week** of staff time is allocated to participate in meetings and activities of the Homeward Bound Review Committee and the Homeward Bound program. In addition, approximately \$1,200 per year is allocated to assisting in preparing the annual Continuum of Care supportive housing application. **Funding Source:** CDBG; HOME **Outcome:** DH-3, increasing the sustainability of decent housing.

**Objective HL-3: Continue to administer the 2009 HPRP grant and pursue renewed funding if available.**

*Actions planned to address this objective:* Approximately **4 hours/week** of staff time is allocated to coordinating, administering, and monitoring the 2009 HPRP grant to provide short-term, emergency assistance to prevent and address homelessness (see Objective RH-3). *Funding Source:* **CDBG** *Expected Number:* Approx. 480 households assisted over 2-year period *Outcome:* **DH-3**, increasing the sustainability of decent housing.

**Objective HL-4: Support efforts to increase the number of emergency, transitional, and permanent beds and units for homeless individuals and families for which no or limited housing is currently available.**

*Actions planned to address this objective:* None at this time. Possible future allocation of funds to assist a nonprofit organization(s) to provide additional beds or units for specific subpopulations of the homeless for which a need is identified. May be in conjunction with Objective RH-2. *Funding Source:* **HOME, CDGB or other** *Performance indicator:* Housing units. *Expected Number:* **N/A** *Outcome:* **DH-1**, increasing the supply and availability of affordable, decent housing for the homeless.

### **C. Special Needs**

**Objective SN-1: Support additional affordable housing opportunities for special needs population groups.**

*Actions planned to address this objective:* None at this time. Due to current market conditions, the relatively low identified unmet need, and the amount of new special needs housing which has been provided (and in several cases which the City financially assisted) in the past five years, there are no current plans to fund additional housing units for persons with special needs. However, the City may consider allocating limited HOME or CDBG funding in future plan years to assist with such projects in conjunction with other public and private funding, and with nonprofit development or supportive service organizations to address particular identified needs (such as housing for persons with dementia, independent living facilities for persons with physical and developmental disabilities, or group facilities for persons with severe mental illness). This could include new units or expansion/rehabilitation of existing structures. May be in conjunction with Objective RH-2. *Funding Source:* **HOME, CDBG or other** *Performance*

**indicator: Housing Units. Expected Number: 8** (8 units/year x 1 year) **Outcome: DH-1**, increasing the supply and availability of affordable, decent housing for persons with special needs.

## **D. Community Development**

### **1. Community Development Objectives**

#### **Objective CD-1: Continue code enforcement of abandoned, unsafe and substandard structures.**

Actions planned to address this objective: **Neighborhood Standards Program.** Continue, support and strengthen this program which includes the enforcement of housing regulations and legal action against landlords and home owners who are not in compliance. This improves the quality of both the rental and owner-occupied housing stock, providing better housing conditions and more attractive neighborhoods for the City's low-income residents. This program is also locally funded; currently, CDBG funds two of the five Neighborhood Standards Officers (NSOs) and the Neighborhood Inspections Administrator, who are dedicated to housing, zoning, and property standards enforcement. All of the CDBG-funded NSO's code enforcement activities will occur within the Neighborhood Revitalization Area. **Funding Source: CDBG Performance indicator: Units Expected Number: 1,750** (av. 350/year x 5 years) **Outcome: DH-3 and SL-3**, sustainability of decent housing and a suitable living environment for the City's low-income residents.

#### **Objective CD-2: Continue demolition of abandoned, unsafe and substandard structures.**

Actions planned to address this objective: **Demolition Program.** Continue and support the demolition of vacant, abandoned, and substandard structures through the enforcement of building code regulations and legal action against property owners, in order to improve safety and quality of older, inner-city neighborhoods. This program is also locally funded; currently, CDBG funds one Neighborhood Standards Officers (NSOs) and the Neighborhood Inspections Administrator to coordinate the demolition process. At least 75% of demolition cases are expected to occur within the Neighborhood Revitalization Area. **Funding Source: CDBG Performance indicator: Units Expected Number: 100** (20/year x 5 years) **Outcome: SL-3**, sustainability of a suitable living environment for the City's low-income residents.

## 2. Infrastructure Objectives

### **Objective I-1: Continue to improve infrastructure in low income neighborhoods by replacement or repair.**

*Actions planned to address this objective:* The City has allocated nearly \$400,000 in 2009 CDBG-R funds to replace deteriorated sidewalks and install sidewalk ramps in the “Weed and Seed” project area, and will continue to administer this project until all funds are expended. The City would consider re-applying for additional funding to be used within the Neighborhood Revitalization Area if this program is renewed. *Funding Source:* **FY09 CDBG-R Performance indicator: LMA Expected Number: N/A Outcome: SL-3**, sustainability of a suitable living environment for the City’s low-income residents.

## 3. Public Facilities Objectives

### **Objective PF-1: Support the development and/or rehabilitation of public facilities which address an identified community need.**

*Actions planned to address this objective:* While no particular projects are currently planned, the City would consider future funding to address an identified underserved public need, especially if in conjunction with a nonprofit organization and/or to match other funding sources. This could include asbestos removal at a non-residential structure, pedestrian/bikeways in low-income neighborhoods, community centers in underserved areas, etc. *Funding Source:* **CDBG Performance indicator: Public facilities Expected Number: N/A Outcome: SL-3**, sustainability of a suitable living environment for the City’s low-income residents.

## 4. Public Services Objectives

### **Objective PS-1: Collaborate with vocational, business, and other organizations to provide new/expanded educational and job training opportunities for low-income residents.**

*Actions planned to address this objective:* Consultations and citizen comments listed increased job training, literacy, skill development, education, and employment services as a high community need. Many area organizations are working to address these needs. The City would consider providing limited funding for an organization/program(s) to assist in these efforts in conjunction with other funding sources. \$100,000 in FY08 CDBG funds has been allocated for a new or expanded employment training program that is expected to be expended within the next

two years. If successful, an additional \$50,000 will be allocated in a future year. **Funding Source:** CDBG **Performance indicator:** **Persons Expected Number:** 25 (av. 5/year x 5 years) **Outcome:** EO-1, increased availability and accessibility to economic opportunities.

## 5. Economic Development Objectives

### **Objective ED-1: Support the sustainability of the Wabash Crossing development.**

#### Actions planned to address this objective:

1. CDBG funds will continue to be used for repayment of a Section 108 loan which provided infrastructure in support of the Wabash Crossing new affordable housing development. **Funding Source:** CDBG **Performance indicator:** N/A **Expected Number:** N/A **Outcome:** DH-3 and EO-3, sustainability of decent housing and economic opportunity.
2. A "Wabash Towne Center" is planned at the former Longview administrative office site. This may include retail, service, and community center facilities. Completion of the Wabash Towne Center is a goal of the DHA and the City, and will probably involve use of tax credits, possibly in conjunction with other funding sources. **Funding Source:** CDBG **Performance indicator:** N/A **Expected Number:** N/A **Outcome:** EO-1, availability of new economic opportunity.

### **Objective ED-2: Proactively identify and pursue clean-up and reuse of functionally obsolete and vacant properties.**

The Division of Planning conducted an inventory of properties in a targeted area adjacent to the City's transportation corridors, listing 114 sites as potential Brownfields. These sites range in size from small former corner gas stations to former foundries of over one hundred acres. The Division of Planning and Sustainability is currently seeking a grant from the U.S. EPA to further assess these sites and identify which are Brownfields. Once this is completed, the sites will be prioritized and funding for clean-up and preparation for re-use of the sites will be sought.

Actions planned to address this objective: Possible use of CDBG funds to assist in clean-up and preparation for re-use of identified priority sites, in conjunction with other funding sources. **Funding Source:** CDBG **Performance indicator:** **Businesses Expected Number:** N/A **Outcome:** EO-1, availability of sites for economic opportunity, and SL-3, sustainability of a suitable living environment.

**Objective ED-3: Rehabilitate and restore historic buildings and facades.**

*Actions planned to address this objective:* The City will continue its façade program, which provides matching assistance to business owners in restoring their exterior façade to preserve and/or recreate its historic features, improving its economic viability. *Funding Source:* CDBG *Performance indicator:* Businesses *Expected Number:* 2 (av. \$65,000/unit x 2 units) *Outcome:* EO-3, sustainability of economic opportunity.

**6. Neighborhood Revitalization Objectives**

Refer to **Section VI.A.** for a more detailed discussion of the City's neighborhood revitalization strategy and Neighborhood Regeneration Area.

**Objective NR-1: Continue support of the Coalition of Neighborhood Organizations (CONO).**

*Actions planned to address this objective:* Building and sustaining stronger neighborhood organizations reduces crime and provides a more livable environment for Decatur's low-income residents. The City will continue to provide staff time and financial assistance to support CONO and joint outreach activities such as National Night Out and the Regional Neighborhood Network Conference. It will also continue financial support for CONO's Neighborhood Grant Program, through which individual neighborhood organizations may receive funding for outreach and activities. *Funding Source:* CDBG *Performance indicator:* LMA *Expected Number:* N/A (5 Neighborhood Grants) *Outcome:* SL-3, sustainability of a suitable living environment for the City's low-income residents.

**Objective NR-2: Support crime prevention activities within the Neighborhood Regeneration Area.**

Crime prevention was one of the primary concerns mentioned in community meetings and surveys. Increased crime prevention measures within the City's older, core neighborhoods were identified as a high priority need. Gangs and drug trafficking were the issues of most concern, and are considered to have a major negative impact on several inner-city neighborhoods. For example, the "Weed and Seed" approach has shown promise in increasing crime awareness and prevention.

*Actions planned to address this objective:* Consider funding for crime prevention methods such as street design and lighting, increased police presence, police bicycle patrols, video cameras, other security features, and staff support in high-crime areas of the inner city. *Funding Source:* CDBG *Performance indicator:* LMA *Expected Number:* N/A *Outcome:* SL-3, sustainability of a suitable living environment.

**Table 2A**  
**Priority Housing Needs/Investment Plan Table**

PRIORITY HOUSING NEEDS (households)		Priority		Unmet Need
Renter	Small Related	0-30%	M	878
		31-50%	M	403
		51-80%	L	139
	Large Related	0-30%	M	245
		31-50%	M	168
		51-80%	L	59
	Elderly	0-30%	M	447
		31-50%	M	333
		51-80%	L	24
	All Other	0-30%	M	818
		31-50%	M	370
		51-80%	L	208
Owner	Small Related	0-30%	H	319
		31-50%	H	339
		51-80%	M	228
	Large Related	0-30%	H	83
		31-50%	H	64
		51-80%	M	100
	Elderly	0-30%	H	524
		31-50%	H	328
		51-80%	M	230
	All Other	0-30%	H	323
		31-50%	H	153
		51-80%	M	224
	Elderly	0-80%	M	1886
	Frail Elderly	0-80%	M	283
	Severe Mental Illness	0-80%	M	20
	Physical Disability	0-80%	M	8
	Developmental Disability	0-80%	M	95
	Alcohol/Drug Abuse	0-80%	M	20
	HIV/AIDS	0-80%	L	0
	Victims of Domestic	0-80%	L	41

**Table 2A**  
**Priority Housing Needs/Investment Plan Goals**

Priority Need	5-Yr. Goal Plan/Act	Yr. 1 Goal Plan/Act	Yr. 2 Goal Plan/Act	Yr. 3 Goal Plan/Act	Yr. 4 Goal Plan/Act	Yr. 5 Goal Plan/Act
<b>Renters</b>						
0 - 30 of MFI	10/	2/	2/	4/	2/	0
31 - 50% of MFI	24/	5/	5/	9/	5/	0
51 - 80% of MFI	14/	3/	3/	5/	3/	0
<b>Owners</b>						
0 - 30 of MFI	75/	24/	13/	12/	13/	13/
31 - 50 of MFI	120/	38/	21/	19/	21/	21/
51 - 80% of MFI	44/	13/	8/	7/	8/	8/
<b>Homeless* (2009 HPRP)</b>						
Individuals	830/	415/	415/	0	0	0
Families	480/	240/	240/	0	0	0
<b>Non-Homeless Special Needs</b>						
Elderly	27/					
Frail Elderly	4/	0	0	0	0	4/
Severe Mental Illness	0					
Physical Disability	5/	1/	1/	1/	1/	1/
Developmental Disability	4/	0	0	0	0	4/
Alcohol/Drug Abuse	0					
HIV/AIDS	0					
Victims of Domestic Violence	0					
<b>Total</b>						
<b>Total Section 215</b>						
<b>215 Renter</b>	108/	20/	20/	28/	20/	20/
<b>215 Owner</b>	239/					

\* Homeless individuals and families assisted with transitional and permanent housing

MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE  
FIVE YEAR CONSOLIDATED PLAN

Tuesday, November 24, 2009, 6:00 P.M.  
Decatur Public Library

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Mrs. Richelle Irons, Assistant Director of Economic and Urban Development stated that the Five Year Consolidated Plan is a compilation of ideas and suggestions of the needs of the community. Mrs. Irons stated that the Five Year Consolidated Plan is submitted to the Department of Housing and Urban Development and serves as a living document for people to utilize for documentation of future grants.

Mrs. Terry Cunningham stated that the City of Decatur is in the process of developing the Five Year Consolidated Plan which is required by the federal government in order to receive funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Mrs. Cunningham gave an overview of the Plan.

Comments and questions from the residents in attendance were as follows:

A resident asked if there was a way to increase the amount of Section 8 Housing. He feels there is a great shortage of decent rental units.

Ms. Verle Janes stated in her neighborhood people move into a rental home and just demolish it. She feels there should be some type of protection for the landlords. The expense of fixing things is too high to just have the homes wrecked. There needs to be some kind of balance.

A citizen said in Kentucky Section 8 can be used to purchase a home. She feels this would be beneficial since so many homes sit vacant in the older parts of town.

Mr. Brad Berry stated a lot of the problems in his neighborhood come from rental houses. He would like to see some type of coordination with the police. He said these people are usually repeat offenders for noise pollution and the police have been called but nothing changes.

A resident suggested some type of screening process should be done for tenants as well as landlords.

A landlord stated she and her husband own several housing authority rental properties and their properties are inspected twice a year. The landlords that do not have housing authority properties do not have to be inspected. There are several that are slumlords. She feels the City inspectors that are out for garbage violations, etc., should look around and write these slumlords up.

Several residents stated they feel that landlords should be licensed to help alleviate these types of problems.

A citizen stated that there are many people who own rental properties that do not even live in Illinois.

A resident said there are people who do not do their own maintenance work anymore due to getting older or for health reasons. She feels it would be nice to have some type of list of reputable contractors that people could use and feel comfortable about calling them. Possibly have an on-line list with reviews on it from people who previously used them.

A resident stated there is a big need for the Residential Rehabilitation Program.

A citizen said there is a need for more police involvement before the Wabash Town Center is developed.

Several residents felt there was a need for a program to train individuals for minor home maintenance.

A citizen stated that Bloomington has a bike path that goes through the City and she would like to see the same in Decatur. She said the bike path we presently have is wonderful but would like to see one that connects to areas in the City.

Ms. Verle Janes stated she would like to see a public facility in the Fans Field neighborhood for functions such as a chili supper for the whole neighborhood.

Mrs. Francie Johnson said that Gallaway Park neighborhood is the same. They have absolutely nothing to hold any neighborhood function in.

A citizen responded that many of the neighborhoods rely on the churches in their area to hold functions.

Ms. Julie Pangrac stated she would like to speak to enforce the need for adult literacy through Project Read. They have worked with money from City grants. They are sending people successfully after improving their reading and math to CNA classes at Richland and to job training. These are people who want to learn. They are limited to what they can do through the amount of funds they receive. They hope the City will continue to support them.

A citizen stated there is a beautiful bicycle path from the west end to downtown but there is no place to park your bike in the downtown area. Surrounding cities have bike racks on the front of their buses.

Ms. Verle Janes said she feels there is a problem with standing water on streets. In the winter there is a skating rink at Grand and Locust. They also have flooding in basements. Surface drainage is also a problem in certain areas. Ditches are not maintained properly.

Several citizens are concerned about gangs in Decatur and would like to see male and female gang interventionists.

A resident would like to see the City and School Board continue working together on a decision for the high school. He said if the decision is to build a new high school he would like to have something carved out of an inner City neighborhood, not put it in Wabash Crossing.

Several citizens said crime and drug trafficking are Citywide. They would like to see all forms of government connected to help with the problem. This also creates a turnover in rental properties. People are scared and do not want to get involved.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Mrs. Mary DeVera stated that she has recently started a program called the Decatur Family Refuse, Inc. that focuses on the family. Mrs. DeVera stated that the program will start in January.

Ms. Maeleene Bird stated that she is the founder of an agency in Decatur called HELP "Heaven and Earth Listening to People". Ms. Bird stated that the agency offers a program called "A New You" which allows free services such as manicures, pedicures, haircuts, and makeovers because they believe that if you look good you will feel good and accomplish your goals. Ms. Bird stated that the agency was founded three years ago and that they work with other agencies such as Dove, The Salvation Army, and the Grace House. Ms. Bird stated that the agency has 191 volunteers and they have worked 300 in-kind service hours.

Ms. Baker stated that she would like to see emergency shelters take people who are physically disabled; she added that most shelters are not equipped for handling people with physical disabilities.

Ms. Baker stated that there will be massive state funding cuts and that she would like to encourage the city to use funds on programs that already exists rather than new programs. Ms. Baker stated that most agencies will need assistance to keep their doors open.

Ms. Megan Towner stated that she works with a free program called Project Read which helps adults improve their reading and math skills. Ms. Towner stated that Project Read needs funding to train their tutors.

Mr. Dave Roth, Lutheran Child and Family Services, stated that it is a challenge to speak directly to the individuals who use the programs and asked to find ways to reach out to them.

Mrs. Irons responded that individuals applying for different programs will be asked to fill out a survey as well as the different agencies.

Mr. O'Laughlin stated that the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) has been a good program for the elderly and provides a sense of security while also deterring crime.

PUBLIC MEETING: 2010-14 CONSOLIDATED PLAN  
SIGN-IN SHEET

Page 1 of 1

☐ Tuesday, November 17 2009 4:00 p.m.  
Decatur Civic Center

☒ Tuesday, November 24, 2009 6:00 p.m.  
Decatur Public Library.

PRINT YOUR NAME	ORGANIZATION (if any)	PHONE #	E-MAIL ADDRESS
Jackie Baughman	Dave - CS	---	baughman@doveinc.org
Sue Neisslie	CONO - GM <sup>2</sup>	201-722-1	con3294@yahoo.com
BRAD BERRY	NPANW - CONO	422-3148	paidd2hcapanthr@comcast.net
Cynthia E. Murray	WCRDH - CONO	917-CDCO	
Verle Jones	FFWA - CONO	423-1206	
Holly Murray	Mowing Properties	767-2756	Hollymurray@yahoo.com
Bridgette Hearns	WCRDH		
Lillian Goodman	Decatur Community Partnership	421-6566	vbaughman@richland.edu
Charles Long	FFWA	423-2409	mklaury62@5826684.net
Rich Hunter	Nelson Pacer - A.N.W.	423-7242	hunnerich@Comcast.net
George Batson	Decatur Area Habitat	422-8319	
Julie Pangrac	Project READ	423-7323	jpangrac@richland.edu
FRANCIE JOHNSON	DAVE CSP/DAP	428-6616	fjohnson@doveinc.org
Sue Baulch	GM Square	877-4720	union2045@shcglobal.net
Sandra Shaw	NUGA	422-1474	
Lillie Jackson	NUGA	422-6470	
Marcia Phillips	OKO	433-0611	MWP23IL@AOL.COM
DARWIN SHROYER	W FENH	429-7776	LINDA.SHROYER@27711.NET
JOHN PHILLIPS	NWRAPS	454-5652	johnip@panasonic.com



## Coalition Of Neighborhood Organizations

P.O. Box 3294  
Decatur, Illinois 62524

### AGENDA TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2009 A.E. Staley Conference Room DECATUR PUBLIC LIBRARY 7:00 p.m.

(6:00p.m. if you are planning to attend the City's 5 Year Plan presentation)

Call to Order:

Introductions:

Neighborhood Reports:

Treasurer's Report:

Secretary's Report:

Speaker

- 

President's Report:

- CONO Christmas

Agency Reports:

*Dove, Heritage, DCP*

Questions, Comments, Concerns

Adjournment

#### NEXT MEETING:

► Christmas Party at OKO Community Center ◀  
TUESDAY, December 15, 2009 6:00 pm



Have a Happy

Thanksgiving

## **NOTICE OF FIVE-YEAR CONSOLIDATED PLAN/ FY2010 ACTION PLAN PUBLIC HEARING**

The City of Decatur will host a public hearing on its 2010-14 Five-Year Consolidated Plan and 2010 Action Plan at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 28 in the City Council chambers of the Decatur Civic Center.

The Consolidated Plan documents the City's proposed five-year goals, strategies and activities as they relate to the spending of its federal Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnership allocations. The Action Plan outlines how federal resources will be spent during the 2010 fiscal year to address these goals. The draft Plan will be presented at the Hearing.

A copy of the draft will be available for the public to review beginning January 29 at the following locations:

Economic and Urban Development Department  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
#1 Gary K. Anderson Plaza  
Decatur, IL 62523

Decatur Public Library  
130 N. Franklin St.  
Decatur, IL 62523

Decatur Housing Authority  
1808 E. Locust  
Decatur, IL 62521

The draft Plan will also be available on the City's website at [www.ci.decaturnil.us](http://www.ci.decaturnil.us).

Persons are encouraged to provide written comments during, or after the scheduled hearing. For more information, contact Richelle D. Irons, Assistant Director of Economic and Urban Development/Outreach Manager at (217) 424-2864. Written comments can be sent to the City of Decatur, Economic and Urban Development Department, #1 Gary K. Anderson Plaza, Decatur, IL 62523, or faxed to: 217.424.2728 ATTN: Assistant Director of Economic and Urban Development/Outreach Manager. Comments may also be e-mailed to: [5yearplan@decaturnil.gov](mailto:5yearplan@decaturnil.gov).

# CERTIFICATE OF PUBLICATION

State of Illinois )  
 ) ss.  
 County of Macon )

I, the undersigned, do hereby certify that I am the publisher of DECATUR TRIBUNE, a public and secular newspaper of general circulation, published weekly in the City of Decatur, Macon County, Illinois, and that the same has been regularly published for at least one year prior to the date of the first publication of the notice hereinafter mentioned, and is qualified as a newspaper as defined in Act - Chapter 100, Sections 1 and 5, Illinois Revised Statutes.

I further certify that a notice, or advertisement, of which the annexed is a true printed copy, has been regularly published in said newspaper, times, once in each week for successive weeks, the first publication thereof having been made in the issue of the DECATUR TRIBUNE on the day of 2007, A.D. 2007 and the last publication thereof having been made in the issue of said newspaper published on the day of 2007, A.D. 2007.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at Decatur in said County and State, this 13 day of 2007, A.D. 2007.

*Gregory V. Calver*  
 Publisher

DECATUR TRIBUNE

Received Payment

By \_\_\_\_\_

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 Decatur Public Library, 130 N. Franklin St., Decatur, IL 62523  
 Decatur Housing Authority, 1808 E. Locust, Decatur, IL 62521

The draft Plan will also be available on the City's website at [www.decaturl.gov](http://www.decaturl.gov).

Persons are encouraged to provide written comments during, or after the scheduled hearing. For more information, contact Richelle D. Irons, Assistant Director of Economic and Urban Development/Outreach Manager at (217) 424-2864. Written comments can be sent to the City of Decatur, Economic and Urban Development Department, #1 Gary K. Anderson Plaza, Decatur, IL 62523, or faxed to: 217.424.2728. ATTN: Assistant Director of Economic and Urban Development/Outreach Manager. Comments may also be e-mailed to: [plan@decaturl.gov](mailto:plan@decaturl.gov).

## NOTICE OF FIVE-YEAR CONSOLIDATED PLAN/FY2010 ACTION PLAN PUBLIC HEARING

The City of Decatur will host a public hearing on its 2010-14 Five-Year Consolidated Plan and 2010 Action Plan at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 28 in the City Council chambers of the Decatur Civic Center.

# 20288465

CERTIFICATE OF PUBLICATION  
IN  
**Herald & Review**

Billed to Solicitors  
or Attorneys

City of Decatur  
1 Gary K Anderson Plaza  
Decatur, IL 62523

In the matter of:

Notice of Five-Year Consolidated Plan/FY2010

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20288465**

**NOTICE OF FIVE-YEAR  
CONSOLIDATED PLAN/  
FY2010 ACTION PLAN  
PUBLIC HEARING**

The City of Decatur will host a public hearing on its 2010-14 Five-Year Consolidated Plan and 2010 Action Plan at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 28 in the City Council chambers of the Decatur Civic Center.

The Consolidated Plan documents the City's proposed five-year goals, strategies and activities as they relate to the spending of its federal Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnership allocations. The Action Plan outlines how federal resources will be spent during the 2010 fiscal year to address these goals. The draft Plan will be presented at the Hearing.

A copy of the draft will be available for the public to review beginning January 29 at the following locations:

Economic and Urban Development Department  
3rd Floor  
#1 Gary K. Anderson Plaza  
Decatur, IL 62523

Decatur Public Library  
130 N. Franklin St.  
Decatur, IL 62523

Decatur Housing Authority  
1808 E. Locust  
Decatur, IL 62521

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Gary K. Anderson Plaza, Decatur, IL 62523, or faxed to: 217.424.2728 ATTN: Assistant Director of Economic and Urban Development/Outreach Manager. Comments may also be e-mailed to: [5yearplan@decaturil.gov](mailto:5yearplan@decaturil.gov).

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Macon County

HERALD & REVIEW, a division of LEE ENTERPRISES INCORPORATED, a corporation, does hereby certify that it is the publisher of the Herald & Review, a daily secular newspaper of general circulation in said County, printed and published in the City of Decatur, in said County and State, and that said newspaper is a newspaper as defined in "An Act to revise the law in relation to notices," approved February 13, 1874, as amended, and that the advertisement or notice hereunto annexed and made a part of this certificate has been published in said newspaper one time in each and every copy and impression of the final edition thereof, and that the publication thereof was in the final edition of said newspaper on

Thursday, the 14th, day of January,  
A.D., 2010, and that

Jenette Johnson by resolution of the Board of Directors, has authority to make this certificate.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, the said Jenette Johnson has hereunto affixed the name of said Company, this 14th day of January,  
A.D., 2010

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HERALD & REVIEW, a division of  
LEE ENTERPRISES INCORPORATED

Received \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

By

*Jenette Johnson*

**Herald & Review**

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**Table 2A**  
**Priority Housing Activities**

Priority Need	5-Yr.	Yr. 1	Yr. 2	Yr. 3	Yr. 4	Yr. 5
<b>CDBG</b>						
Acquisition of existing rental units	0					
Production of new rental units	0					
Rehabilitation of existing rental units	0					
Rental assistance (counseling)	40/	10/	10/	10/	10/	0
Acquisition of existing owner units	0					
Production of new owner units	0					
Rehabilitation of existing owner units	165/	33/	33/	33/	33/	33/
Homeownership assistance	0					
<b>HOME</b>						
Acquisition of existing rental units	0					
Production of new rental units	8			8		
Rehabilitation of existing rental units	0					
Rental assistance	0					
Acquisition of existing owner units	0					
Production of new owner units	4/					4/
Rehabilitation of existing owner units	45/	9/	9/	9/	9/	9/
Homeownership assistance	25/	5/	5/	5/	5/	5/
<b>HOPWA</b>						
Rental assistance						
Short term rent/mortgage utility						
Facility based housing development						
Facility based housing operations						
Supportive services						
<b>Other</b>						
<b>ESG (2009 HPRP)</b>	480/	240/	240/	0	0	0

**Table 2B**  
**Priority Community Development Needs**

	Priority Need	Unmet	Dollars to	5 Yr	Annual	Percent
Acquisition of Real Property	L					
Disposition	L					
Clearance and Demolition	H					
Clearance of Contaminated Sites	H					
Code Enforcement	H					
Public Facility (General)						
Senior Centers	L					
Handicapped Centers	L					
Homeless Facilities	L					
Youth Centers	L					
Neighborhood Facilities	M					
Child Care Centers	L					
Health Facilities	L					
Mental Health Facilities	L					
Parks and/or Recreation Facilities	L					
Parking Facilities	L					
Tree Planting	L					
Fire Stations/Equipment	L					
Abused/Neglected Children Facilities	L					
Asbestos Removal	M					
Non-Residential Historic Preservation	M					
Other Public Facility Needs	L					
Infrastructure (General)						
Water/Sewer Improvements	M					
Street Improvements	M					
Sidewalks	M					
Solid Waste Disposal Improvements	L					
Flood Drainage Improvements	M					
Other Infrastructure	L					
Public Services (General)						
Senior Services	M					
Handicapped Services	L					
Legal Services	L					
Youth Services	M					
Child Care Services	L					
Transportation Services	M					
Substance Abuse Services	L					
Employment/Training Services	H					
Health Services	M					
Lead Hazard Screening	M					
Crime Awareness	H					
Fair Housing Activities	M					
Tenant Landlord Counseling	H					
Other Services (Homeowner counseling)	M					
Other Services (Homeless services)	M					
Economic Development (General)	H					
C/I Land Acquisition/Disposition	M					
C/I Infrastructure Development	M					
C/I Building Acq/Const/Rehab	L					
Other C/I	H					
ED Assistance to For-Profit	L					
ED Technical Assistance	L					
Micro-enterprise Assistance	L					
Other						

**Transition Table 2C**  
**Summary of Specific Housing/Community Development Objectives**  
**(Table 2A/2B Continuation Sheet)**

Obj #	Specific Objectives	Sources of Funds	Performance Indicators	Expected Number	Actual Number	Outcome/ Objective *
	<b>Rental Housing</b>					
RH-1	Provide housing counseling services to low income renter households.	CDBG	Households	100		DH-3
RH-2	Provide additional affordable rental housing opportunities to meet a specific need.	HOME	Housing Units	8		DH-1
RH-3	Continue assisting low-income renters to sustain housing and prevent homelessness.	FY09 HPRP; N/A	N/A	N/A		DH-3
	<b>Owner Housing</b>					
OH-1	Improve existing housing conditions for low-income homeowners.	HOME/ CDBG	Housing Units	200		DH-3
OH-2	Provide financial assistance to low income first-time homebuyers.	HOME	Households	25		DH-2
OH-3	Provide new home ownership opportunities for low income households	HOME	Housing Units	14		DH-1
	<b>Homelessness</b>					
HL-1	Continue to coordinate with homeless service providers and other organizations to educate the public about homelessness.	CDBG	Hours	N/A		DH-3
HL-2	Continue to support the Homeward Bound transitional housing program.	CDBG	Hours	N/A		DH-3
HL-3	Continue to administer the 2009 HPRP grant and pursue renewed funding if available.	CDBG	Hours	N/A		DH-3

HL-4	Support efforts to increase the number of emergency, transitional, and permanent beds and units for homeless individuals and families for which no or limited housing is currently available.	HOME/ CDBG	Housing Units	N/A		DH-1
	<b>Special Needs</b>					
SN-1	Support additional affordable housing opportunities for identified special need population groups.	HOME/ CDBG	Housing Units	8		DH-1
	<b>Community Development</b>					
CD-1	Continue code enforcement on abandoned, unsafe and substandard structures.	CDBG	Units	1,750		SL-3
CD-2	Continue demolition of abandoned, unsafe and substandard structures.	CDBG	Units	100		SL-3

	<b>Infrastructure</b>					
I-1	Continue to improve infrastructure in low income neighborhoods by replacement or repair.	FY09 CDBG-R	LMA	N/A		SL-3
	<b>Public Facilities</b>					
PF-1	Support the development and/or rehabilitation of public facilities which address an identified community need.	CDBG	Public Facilities	N/A		SL-3
	<b>Public Services</b>					
PS-1	Collaborate with vocational, business and other organizations to provide new/expanded educational and job training opportunities for low income residents.	CDBG	Persons	25		EO-1
	<b>Economic Development</b>					
ED-1	Support the sustainability of the Wabash Crossing development.	CDBG	N/A	N/A		EO-3
ED-2	Proactively identify and pursue clean-up and reuse of functionally obsolete and vacant properties.	CDBG	Businesses	N/A		EO-3

ED-3	Rehabilitate and restore historic buildings and facades.	CDBG	Businesses	2		EO-3
	<b>Neighborhood Revitalization</b>					
NR-1	Continue support of the Coalition of Neighborhood organizations (CONO).	CDBG	LMA	N/A		SL-3
NR-2	Support crime prevention activities within the Neighborhood Regeneration Area.	CDBG	LMA	N/A		SL-3

**\*Outcome/Objective Codes**

	<b>Availability/Accessibility</b>	<b>Affordability</b>	<b>Sustainability</b>
<b>Decent Housing</b>	DH-1	DH-2	DH-3
<b>Suitable Living Environment</b>	SL-1	SL-2	SL-3
<b>Economic Opportunity</b>	EO-1	EO-2	EO-3

**SECTION VI**  
**THE STRATEGIC PLAN**  
**OTHER INITIATIVES**

## SECTION VI: THE STRATEGIC PLAN: OTHER INITIATIVES

Section V of this document described the specific objectives and activities which the City's annual CDBG and HOME funds will be allocated to address. However, the City has other overall plans, strategies and objectives which it will implement over the next five years in cooperation with other organizations and resources to meet identified community needs.

### A. Neighborhood Revitalization

**The underlying theme of Decatur's 2010-14 Consolidated Plan is Neighborhood Regeneration.** The majority of programs and strategies described in this Plan are designed to improve the quality of life for residents of this "core area" of the city. Several initiatives undertaken by the City in the past five years support this concept:

1. In 2005, the City approved a new **Neighborhood Improvements Commission**. This serves as the official organization for providing input and making recommendations to the City Council and city staff on issues designed to build upon neighborhood strengths and prevent their decline. The Commission is the official channel for hearing concerns and complaints from neighborhood groups and residents, providing direction on neighborhood policy issues, helping to solicit and provide input into the annual CDBG and HOME funding process, and developing a grants program for neighborhood improvement projects. The Commission includes three members from the Coalition of Neighborhood Organizations (CONO), three from the Decatur Landlord's Association, and three at-large members appointed by the Mayor. The Neighborhood Redevelopment Division will serve as staff liaison.

2. In August 2009, the City of Decatur and Macon County adopted a new **Comprehensive Plan**. One of the principles of the Comprehensive Plan is that a network of centers, corridors and neighborhoods serves as the organizing framework for planning for future growth and redevelopment. This Plan calls for implementing a sub-area strategy which divides the region into centers, corridors and neighborhoods. The central, core residential area of Decatur is designated as "**Regenerating Neighborhoods**": neighborhoods undergoing a long-term adverse transition of land use and/or density. They exhibit physical deterioration of private structures and public facilities, underutilized land and buildings, and declining property values.

The Comprehensive Plan lists these strategies for regenerating neighborhoods:

- Facilitate residential redevelopment of an infill on a block-wide scale as appropriate to existing conditions.
- Create mortgage equity insurance programs to reduce the risk of new residential and commercial investment.
- Encourage employer-subsidized home ownership programs that increase home ownership in targeted neighborhoods.

- Assure that code enforcement is backed by rehabilitation grants and loans to enable homeowners or landlords to make needed improvements within their financial means.
- Modify zoning requirements to enable lot assemblage and the development of new, contemporary sized housing types.
- Provide public infrastructure improvements including street and sidewalk repair, public landscape improvements, and lighting.
- Create vacant or abandoned lot purchase opportunities that favor adjacent homeowners, local developers who commit to constructing desired housing types priced to reflect local market, and other parties who can present a program that commits to carrying out city and neighborhood supported revitalization action

3. In response to City Council forums held in 2007, the City created the **Neighborhood Outreach Division** as a direct point of contact for neighborhood issues and concerns. Along with addressing complaints about nuisance properties, other activities of this Division have included streamlining the code enforcement process, administering the Adopt-a-Street Program, working with the Green Light Garden Project on a community garden, administering a Safe Routes to School grant to encourage children to walk and bicycle to one of the inner-city schools, partnering in neighborhood clean-ups, creating new and improved methods of communicating city information to its citizens, and taking the lead role in the Regional Neighborhood Network conference held in Decatur in September 2009.

4. In 2007, Decatur was selected by the U.S. Department of Justice as a “**Weed and Seed**” site. This program is designed to assist communities struggling with persistent high levels of serious violent crime and corresponding social problems. The Weed & Seed partnership requires the community’s residents to work with civic leaders, business owners, churches, schools and service programs as a steering committee to design a comprehensive plan to reduce crime and improve the quality of life. The designated Decatur Near North Side Weed and Seed Program area is overseen by a steering committee and staffed by a Site Coordinator, whose main role is collaboration with other agencies and the police, holding informational meetings, linking people with services etc. The Program received \$175,000 in 2007, the first year of the 5-year program, but was reduced to \$150,000 in year 2 and \$142,000 in the current year. Funding is anticipated to be further reduced to \$100,000 next year and \$75,000 in 2011, the final year of the grant. Along with funding the Site Coordinator, the grant also funds part-time overtime funds for police in the Weed & Seed area. It also paid for four video cameras in high crime areas and for a police bike patrol.

5. A future goal is to develop **Neighborhood Action Plans** to provide a framework for City staff and neighborhood groups and residents to work together to improve neighborhoods.

Neighborhood input would be gathered through a series of City Council-led forums to identify concerns and possible solutions.

Accordingly, the City is hereby locally designating a **Neighborhood Regeneration Area (NRA)** which encompasses Decatur's urban core. A map of the Neighborhood Regeneration Area is included in *Appendix C*. In general this area encompasses the City's oldest housing stock, highest concentration of low-income and minority residents, oldest housing stock, oldest infrastructure, and criminal activity.

**The City's strategy for the locally-designated Neighborhood Regeneration Area is as follows:**

- *Anticipate use of at least 75% of the City's total annual allocation of CDBG and HOME funds for programs, projects and services within the NRA.*
- *Continue to support the current Weed and Seed program, and encourage efforts to extend aspects of this strategy throughout the NRA.*
- *Adopt a comprehensive approach to core revitalization including code enforcement, demolition of unsafe structures, rehabilitation and re-use of suitable structures, crime prevention and enforcement, public services, infrastructure improvements, commercial district enhancements, etc. as identified by City staff and neighborhood residents.*
- *Support partnerships with CONO, neighborhood organizations, faith-based groups and other organizations focusing resources on improvements to core neighborhoods.*
- *Encourage redevelopment and reuse of vacant, functionally obsolete and environmentally challenged sites.*
- *Support efforts to renovate and maintain historic structures and historic districts.*

The objectives outlined in Section V, item 6 (Non-Housing Community Development Objectives, Neighborhood Revitalization Objectives) specifically address the Neighborhood Regeneration Area strategy herein described, as do components of many other specific objectives.

## **B. Public Housing Strategy**

In its PHA 5-Year Plan for 2010-14, the Decatur Housing Authority states its mission as "To provide and maintain quality affordable housing with access to community resources for low to moderate income families and individuals." Its specific goals and objectives are as follows:

**A. Adapt the Decatur Housing Authority's housing stock by increasing the affordable housing supply for elderly by age and elderly by disability as stated in the Consolidated Plan and completing the HOPE VI for Longview Place.**

Objectives:

1. DHA will build or acquire up to 161 new affordable housing units by December 31, 2015.
2. DHA will acquire land to construct up to 100 units for affordable housing for senior/disabled using RHF and Program Income funds.
3. DHA will acquire or construct up to 100 family affordable units.
4. DHA will seek an additional 200 HCV Vouchers.
5. DHA will designate one highrise property as age restricted for seniors 55 or older.
6. DHA with its affiliate Not for Profit will apply for LIHTCs to construct affordable housing.

**B. Increase opportunities for low and moderate income persons to attain homeownership.**

Objectives:

1. DHA will seek income sources for programs to help low income individuals overcome barriers to attaining affordable housing.
2. DHA will partner with local Not for Profits to provide homeownership counseling.
3. DHA will seek community partners (bank, S & Ls).
4. DHA will seek FHLB funding in the coming years.
5. DHA will evaluate and formulate plans for a HCV Homeownership Program.

**C. Encourage resident self-sufficiency and facilitate employment opportunities.**

Objectives:

1. DHA will continue to seek funding to construct a retail center within Wabash Crossing to provide job opportunities to residents.
2. DHA will develop a financial incentive package to encourage tenants in Wabash Crossing commercial spaces to employ residents.
3. DHA will continue to aggressively pursue its Section 3 Programs with construction contracts.
4. DHA will seek new income sources to continue services provided through the ROSS program.
5. DHA will apply for a Moving to Work designation to allow expansion of resident self-sufficiency programs and encourage resident employment.
6. DHA will encourage resident participation in State of IL DHS self-sufficiency programs.

**D. Provide ethical stewardship of all programs and services.**

Objectives:

1. Faithfully administer federal programs in accordance with laws and regulations (ongoing).

2. Maintain a system for residents and community members to recommend needed changes in DHA's housing stock and service provision (ongoing).
3. Provide excellent customer service.
4. Manage as a team, cooperating and assisting residents toward self-sufficiency.

**E. Complete management of DHA conversion to Asset Management.**

**Objectives:**

1. Redefine AMPS in a logical manner so all units of a development are within a single AMP.
2. Evaluate and establish a new wait list system including project based waiting lists.
3. Decentralize staff and services as feasible and locate at specific properties and AMPS.
4. Create and implement training programs for staff to broaden skills and transition to independent operations of AMPS by AMP staff.
5. Develop and implement a performance "dashboard" system for monitoring and reporting performance on critical AMP level operations and goals.

**The City of Decatur will help address the needs of public housing and its residents and work with the DHA to meet the goals and objectives outlined above in the following ways:**

- ***Support the DHA's objectives to build or acquire additional housing units and vouchers.*** The City will work with DHA to facilitate land acquisition, building permits, and construction of additional public housing units in support of both the City's Consolidated Plan goals and the PHA plan goals.
- ***Assist DHA residents in attaining homeownership.*** The City will encourage DHA residents to apply for its Homebuyer Program and other homeownership assistance programs provided by private lenders, and will support existing and additional pre- and post- home purchase counseling programs for DHA residents, such as those currently provided by CICD and CIDMCE.
- ***Continue to support and work with programs that encourage resident self-sufficiency, management and employment opportunities.*** The City will work closely with DHA to facilitate construction of a retail center within Wabash Crossing, and will ensure that DHA residents are given priority in any tenant counseling and employment and training programs assisted by CDBG funding. If requested, City staff will continue coordinate with self-sufficiency programs by serving on committees, attending meetings, etc

### **C. Eliminating Barriers to Affordable Housing**

Decatur is committed to pursuing policies which provide incentives to develop and maintain affordable housing within its jurisdiction. It is unlikely that any public policies are a major deterrent to the development of new affordable housing. In fact, the amount of new affordable housing that has been constructed in Decatur in recent years is proof that our policies have encouraged its development. Following is a brief discussion of some local public policies and their impact on affordable housing development.

**1. Zoning.** The City's 2000-2004 Consolidated Plan identified four types of zoning practices that can act as barriers to affordable housing: 1) family size restrictions; 2) presence of mobile/manufactured homes; 3) lot size; and 4) restrictions on group homes and multi-family houses. In 2002, the City of Decatur adopted new zoning regulations which addressed the barriers. The new regulations maintained the generous restrictions on family size. There are no restrictions on the number of related persons that may share a dwelling unit. Up to eight (8) unrelated individuals may occupy a single dwelling unit. This is much higher than the four (4) or five (5) allowed in the zoning ordinances of most Illinois communities. While mobile homes are restricted to mobile home parks, a modular home may be built on any residentially-zoned lot in Decatur. Such homes are regulated by HUD and the State of Illinois and need only to be constructed on a foundation meeting the City of Decatur Building Code.

The new Zoning Regulations made some important changes to allow for **creative development and provide incentives** to construct affordable housing. For instance, the City's Planned Development regulations were streamlined and have been used to allow for flexible development and redevelopment. Prime examples are the adaptive reuse of the former Roosevelt Middle School property into 72 dwelling units for low to moderate income residents, the Reserve at Lakeview, an 80 unit retirement housing facility for low- to moderate-income, and the 471 unit Wabash Crossing development. In all cases, the flexible standards have permitted the reductions in lot sizes and setbacks. In addition, Wabash Crossing mixes single family units with duplexes, fourplexes and townhomes to help achieve affordability across the housing spectrum. Future phases of this project may also include office/commercial uses. The City uses these flexible land use regulation tools to encourage further development of affordable housing.

**2. Building Codes.** To ensure that its fees were not a barrier to new construction, in 2002 the City's Construction Inspection Division surveyed building fees in all other comparably-sized cities in Illinois. The survey confirmed that Decatur's building fees were comparable to all other cities, and should not present any particular barrier to new construction.

The City has adopted use of the 2006 International Residential Building Code to replace outdated codes which in the past may have presented barriers to developers. Since it is standard to most

communities, the new code will be easier for builders to understand and comply with, and thus be an incentive for new construction. It also incorporates higher standards for energy efficiency, saving on utility costs and making new homes more affordable.

In 2010, the City of Decatur is expected to adopt the "*International Existing Building Code*", a separate code for building/housing rehabilitation that distinguishes it from new construction. Adoption of this code could be an incentive for the rehabilitation of Decatur's many historic structures and existing older, affordable homes.

The Building Inspections Division works closely with developers of any affordable housing projects to facilitate construction and eliminate any barriers to their timely completion. In addition, building code officials can make variances or use some flexibility with certain codes to decrease the expense of a rehabilitation or affordable housing project as long as life safety requirements are still being met.

**3. Taxing Policies.** Decatur has shown its willingness to use its taxing authority to stimulate redevelopment in its older, most affordable neighborhoods. In 2000, Decatur adopted an ordinance establishing the "Olde Towne Redevelopment Plan and Project Area" and authorized tax increment financing (TIF) to finance redevelopment project costs. Along with rehabilitation and redevelopment of blighted sections of the downtown, use of the TIF funds included visual enhancement of the residential area through streetscaping and signage, helping to stabilize and preserve this affordable, historic neighborhood. In 2003, City adopted the "Near North Redevelopment Project Area and Redevelopment Plan" and approved tax increment financing for this project, now Wabash Crossing. TIF funds were used for infrastructure and public improvements in support of this major affordable housing development.

**4. Special Districts.** One item that might be considered a barrier to affordable housing in Decatur is the existence of national and local historic districts. Nationally recognized are the Decatur, the Decatur Downtown, and the West End Historic Districts. Locally recognized are the Near West and the Macon Place Historic Districts. All of these are located in the "inner city" of Decatur which includes some of its most affordable housing. Within the locally designated historic districts, a Certificate of Appropriateness is required before any architectural alterations are made to any structure. Certificates are reviewed by the Historical and Architectural Sites Commission (HASC) at monthly meetings for approval or disapproval. Within the national historic districts, a review process is required whenever federal funds are being used for building rehabilitation, and specific federal guidelines must be followed in the rehabilitation work. These processes and requirements can add time and expense, and act as a disincentive to rehabilitation of affordable housing in these areas. However, the preservation of Decatur's historic housing stock is an important goal for the community. Historic district designation enhances property values and helps to safeguard the heritage of the community for the education, pleasure, and

enrichment of all citizens. Decatur's approach is based on the premise that the historic district neighborhoods can and should be growing, vital, and vibrant places to live, work, and congregate. It is hoped that, through flexibility and working together, the goals of preserving these neighborhoods' affordability as well as their historic character can both be achieved.

#### **D. Addressing Lead Paint Hazards**

As discussed in Section II of this document, due to the age and condition of housing in Decatur, especially in the urban core neighborhoods, exposure to the harmful effects of lead-based paint is an issue which must be addressed. The need for continued lead screenings, lead mitigation and abatement work in Decatur remains an important health/environmental issue.

The City of Decatur continues to comply with lead-based paint regulations since the September 2000 enactment of the Title X of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992 requiring all State and local jurisdictions that receive funding from the CDBG program, HOME program, and other CPD programs to adhere to federal lead-based paint regulations. The Decatur Housing Authority (DHA) and any other organizations which receive federal funds are also required to adhere to this regulation.

**The City of Decatur will continue to provide the above-mentioned programs to low to moderate-income families and remain in compliance in the following manner:**

- *The Neighborhood Outreach Division will ensure that staff understands and complies with HUD's lead-based paint regulations.*
- *Staff members will attend HUD's Lead-Based Paint Training & refresher courses.*
- *The City will continue to provide methods and assemble materials to educate rental property owners, homeowners, and occupants of rental housing about the lead-based paint requirements.*
- *The City will continue to nurture the existing relationships and establish new contacts with lead professionals and key partners, such as risk assessors and clearance technicians, public health departments, and HUD lead grantees.*
- *The City will continue to reduce the exposure to lead-based paint hazards in housing units through all its federally-funded housing programs over the next 5 years, thereby improving the quality of the existing housing stock and providing a safer environment for low-moderate income residents.*
- *In cooperation with the Macon County Health Department, complete the current "Get The Lead Out" grant provided by the Illinois Department of Public Health. The goal is mitigation of lead hazards in 17 units of which 10 units have been completed to date.*

- *Continue to work with the Macon County Health Department (MCHD) for provision of lead-based paint risk assessments and clearance tests on the City's federally-funded housing rehabilitation and homebuyer programs, and on addressing lead hazards in homes where children with elevated blood lead levels are identified.*

#### **E. Reducing the Number of Families in Poverty**

Statistics show that Decatur has a high rate of poverty. According to the 2005-07 American Community Survey, nearly 16% of all Decatur's families, and 27.3% of families with children under 18 years old, have incomes below the poverty level. Figures are even more striking for female-headed households: approximately 50% of female-headed households with children are below the poverty level. Over 38% of African-American families are below the poverty level, as are nearly 10% of elderly individuals. According to the 2000 Census the majority of households in poverty are renters: 31% of renter households are below the poverty level, but only 7% of owner households.

The high level of poverty in Decatur may be attributed to a number of different factors including educational attainment and lack of employment and training opportunities. High levels of poverty decrease the opportunities that an individual or family has to achieving the American dream of owning a home, living in a stable environment, providing adequately for one's family, and achieving both economically and socially. Poverty may also indicate that the person or family is one step away from homelessness. Reducing the number of individuals and families in poverty will provide the city with a strong citizenry and more stable neighborhoods.

The City of Decatur is committed to reducing the number of families with income below the poverty level. The City works towards reducing poverty by providing low-income persons and families with programs that provide a more suitable living environment and that motivate and help them move toward full self-sufficiency.

Housing is one of the most critical problems for low income persons. The City will continue to provide grants, and deferred and forgivable loans to improve the property of low-income families, thereby improving their economic situation by adding to the value of the property (for homeowners) and freeing their income to be used for other family needs.

Decatur has a large network of agencies providing social service programs. Many of these agencies are listed as institutional partners in Section I of this document, or under Public Services in Section IV. The City has partnered with various service agencies working to combat poverty, including through use of its CDBG funds. The most recent examples are an allocation to "Project Read" to improve adult literacy and math skills, and the selection of Dove, Inc. to administer the HPRP program. Over the next five years it is anticipated that the City will

continue to partner in various ways with agencies to address the goal of reducing poverty in the community.

The City's strategy will include:

- *Addressing the housing needs of very low income renter households through programs which provide tenant counseling services.*
- *Supporting additional affordable rental housing opportunities to meet a specific identified community need.*
- *Administering the federal Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (HPRP), which was allocated to Dove, Inc., to provide short-term, emergency assistance to low-income households who are at risk of homelessness, and seeking renewed funding for this program if it becomes available.*
- *Providing financial assistance to low-income persons and families to achieve homeownership, improving their financial condition and increasing stability. These families are required to receive homeownership counseling to HUD-certified Homeownership Counseling agencies.*
- *Providing infrastructure improvements to some of Decatur's lowest income neighborhoods through the CDBG-R program, improving the quality of life for its residents.*
- *Working with the Decatur/Macon County Homeless Council to address the lowest income population who are at risk of homelessness.*
- *Continuing the CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) program to increase security in low income neighborhoods.*
- *Supporting and coordinating with job training programs such as Section 3 and Workforce Development, the Decatur Area Vocational Center, and Richland Community College*
- *Support efforts to re-apply for a "Pathways Out of Poverty" grant through the U.S. Department of Labor to retrain workers for emerging jobs in green industries.*
- *Supporting programs to assist public housing residents to improve their quality of life and economic condition.*
- *Ensure that any programs the City initiates or participates in to address poverty are in line with goals established by agencies for which this is a primary mission, such as the Decatur-Macon County Opportunities Corporation (DMCOC), the United Way of Decatur and Mid-Illinois, and the Human Services Area Consortium (HSAC).*

## **F. Building Institutional Structure and Enhancing Coordination**

Section I of this document provides a description of the institutional structure and organizations with which the City partners to carry out its housing and community development objectives. In order to further build this institutional structure, enhance coordination with other public and private agencies, and address any gaps in service delivery, the City intends to:

- *Partner with various housing and homeless service agencies by providing supportive services and staff support. Staff will continue to take an active role with the Fair Housing Committee and the Decatur-Macon County Homeless Council.*
- *Partner with homeless housing and service provider agencies on implementation of the City's Ten-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness.*
- *Fund eligible CHDOs and work closely with them on project development; actively assist other housing organizations which seek to become CHDOs.*
- *Partner with local faith-based institutions, such as Dove, and outreach to additional faith-based organizations to coordinate assistance to the homeless and other population groups.*
- *Take an active role on numerous committees and Boards to coordinate resources such as the Decatur Community Partnership, DCDF, CSAC, Homeward Bound, Decatur Area Education Coalition (DAEC), etc.*
- *Partner with private financial institutions to offer home buyer assistance and promote downpayment assistance programs; work through CICD Welcome Home Program and CIDMCE to offer home buyer counseling services.*
- *Work closely with the DHA on completing and sustaining the Wabash Crossing development and other initiatives to assist public housing residents.*
- *Take an active role in neighborhood advocacy by working closely with CONO, including providing funds to CONO and supporting other neighborhood initiatives such as National Night Out and the Regional Neighborhood Network Conference.*
- *Continue to pursue additional funding opportunities to address the decent, safe, affordable, and accessible housing needs of residents and to address the elimination of slum and blight in our neighborhoods.*
- *Support the goals established by other community organizations to better the lives of Decatur residents, such as the United Way of Decatur and Mid-Illinois, the Macon County Mental Health Board, the Decatur Community Partnership, and the Community Foundation.*
- *Meet regularly with the Division of Planning and the Assistant City Manager for Economic and Urban Development to ensure coordination with local economic development initiatives, transportation plans, historic site preservation, Brownfield redevelopment, energy-efficiency initiatives, etc.*

## **G. Analyzing and Addressing Impediments to Fair Housing**

In order to comply with federal requirements for its Consolidated Plan submission, the City of Decatur completed an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing in October 1993. This study was supplemented in 1997 by a report entitled "Addressing Potential Barriers to Fair Housing" which was developed following a series of meetings between City staff and the local NAACP Chapter. This report identified a number of economic, social, and political impediments associated with home ownership and renting. The City actively addressed these barriers by collaborating with various community institutions, and by promoting existing programs that deal with fair housing issues.

In April 1999, the City of Decatur established a Fair Housing Committee in response to the community's fair and affordable housing concerns. In 2009, the Fair Housing Committee updated its Statement of Purpose and Goals to ensure equal and fair housing opportunities for every citizen in Decatur by protecting the rights of all those in the protected classes covered by Decatur City Code, Chapter 28, Unlawful Discrimination. The goals of the Fair Housing Committee are to educate the community on fair housing practices, eliminate unfair housing practices, and enhance housing opportunities for all. The Fair Housing Committee's objectives are to develop and make housing presentations to community/neighborhood groups and religious groups, provide information on the complaint process to the community and local agencies, promote housing related programs to the community, create a brochure which details local programs available, and produce public service announcements with all local media on fair housing laws. In addition, the Committee will work with real estate agents, brokers, lending institutions, landlords, tenants and others to educate about and to eliminate any unfair housing practices and to report to the Decatur Human Relations Commission any unfair housing practices the Committee receives. The Committee accomplishes this mission by bridging local government, business, nonprofit, and community efforts.

The Fair Housing Committee is currently comprised of representatives of the banking and real estate communities, city staff, Human Relations Commissioners, and community organizations including the Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs), Soyland Access to Independent Living (SAIL), and housing counseling agencies. The City continues to support the Fair Housing Committee through active staff participation, and the City's Human Rights Officer acts as staff to the Committee. The committee meets monthly and has hosted numerous community workshops and sponsors other education initiatives.

The City's Human Rights Officer is also the designated fair housing compliance officer for the City of Decatur. Any discrimination complaints are filed with his office and then officially investigated. If the investigation develops probable cause to believe the complainant was discriminated against and the matter cannot be settled between the parties by the Human Rights

Officer, then the Human Relations Commission holds a public hearing and rules on the evidence received and weighed during the hearing. Complainants also have the option of filing claims with the Illinois Department of Human Rights and, in cases that involve federal housing subsidies, they may file with HUD. After they have exhausted all procedures with the administrative agencies, they may be able to file civil suit in circuit court. Since May 2006, there have been six housing discrimination cases reported to the Human Relations Officer, all of which were resolved locally, dismissed, or dropped by the complainant.

The Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing was updated in the 2005 Consolidated Plan. At that time fourteen impediments to Fair Housing were identified and actions to address these impediments were discussed. In developing the 2010 Consolidated Plan, these impediments were reviewed by the Fair Housing Committee and City staff to determine what revisions were needed. Other documents were reviewed during this process including the *State of Illinois Analysis of Fair Housing Impediments*, published by the Illinois Housing Development authority in February 2009.

Below are the identified potential impediments and proposed strategies and actions as of 2009. This Analysis was reviewed and approved by the Fair Housing Committee at its January 14, 2010 meeting.

**1. *Inner-City Census Tracts, which contain the oldest, most dilapidated housing, also contain the highest minority concentration.***

*Actions:* Wabash Crossing and other new development within the inner city, which receive state and federal funding, require affirmative marketing and will be monitored to ensure that this is carried out. The City of Decatur continues an aggressive code enforcement and demolition program, along with its federally-funded housing rehabilitation programs to improve the housing stock in these neighborhoods. The City is also actively working to improve the condition of rental housing through legal action against “slumlords” and “habitual offenders”. We will continue to explore ways to encourage rehabilitation of the rental housing stock. Improvements to the housing stock should, over time, help to develop a more diverse population base.

**2. *Lack of affordable and suitable housing may restrict fair housing choices.***

*Actions:* The City of Decatur has made significant strides in increasing the amount of affordable housing by providing programs to assist low-income homeowners and home buyers, and providing information on affordable housing opportunities through Affordable Housing Fairs, the “Homebuyer Assistance in Decatur” brochure, and other valuable information. Efforts continue to improve the housing stock and provide additional suitable housing, particularly rental housing, for very low income persons. Although new housing must

meet accessibility guidelines, many older existing units are not accessible to persons with disabilities. The City's residential accessibility program and other community programs continue to assist in providing accessibility improvements, which should help increase the amount of suitable, affordable housing for the elderly and persons with disabilities.

*3. Zoning regulations can restrict the development of affordable housing, thereby restricting fair housing choice.*

*Actions:* The City's zoning ordinance adopted in 2001 allows for flexible and creative development through its "Planned Development" regulations which permit reductions in lot sizes and setbacks and allow for a mixture of housing types and land uses.

*4. Persons with a fair housing complaint may not know what to do or where to go.*

*Actions:* The City of Decatur has established a Human Relations Commission and a Human Rights Officer to process fair housing complaints. The Fair Housing Committee continues to educate the community about their rights. The Committee has held numerous presentations, published a booklet which is available in City offices and the Decatur Public Library, placed information on the City's website, and made other efforts to educate the public about how to file a fair housing complaint; these efforts will continue. The Human Relations Officer believes that an increase in the number of possible discrimination cases and landlord-tenant complaints reported since April 2009 may be a direct result of increased community awareness.

*5. Citizens do not feel empowered to express concerns to the City government regarding housing/neighborhood issues.*

*Actions:* The City's Human Rights Officer is actively trying to assist people in filing fair housing complaints and working through the process. In 2005 the City of Decatur established a Neighborhood Improvements Commission which hears concerns and complaints from residents, consider issues and make recommendations. The City established a Neighborhood Outreach Division in 2007 as a direct point of contact for neighborhood issues and concerns. The City also works with the Coalition Of Neighborhood Organizations (CONO), to address neighborhood concerns.

*6. Some residents may not want homes in their neighborhood for people with disabilities, the formerly homeless, and other special needs populations.*

*Actions:* The City zoning ordinance now permits up to eight unrelated individuals in a single family home. Public education and communication between area residents and agencies sponsoring group housing is required by HUD and will continue.

***7. Minorities are underrepresented in homeownership and may feel a lack of homeownership opportunities.***

*Actions:* Lenders and realtors are becoming more aware of the need to ensure equal opportunity and access for minority homebuyers. Lenders are now required to review mortgage applications thoroughly to ensure that race is not a factor in rejection. City staff continues to promote homeownership programs to minority applicants. Efforts to promote homeownership to the Spanish-speaking population may need to be encouraged.

***8. There is a perception that "racial steering" to certain neighborhoods still occurs.***

*Actions:* Article 10 of the Realtors Code of Ethics provides that "Realtors shall not deny equal professional services to any person for reasons of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin. Realtors shall not be a party to any plan or agreement to discriminate against a person or persons on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status or national origin. Realtors, in their real estate employment practices, shall not discriminate against any person or persons on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status or national origin." The Decatur Association of Realtors (DAR) will accept complaints alleging violations of the Code of Ethics by any of its members, filed by a home seeker who alleges discriminatory treatment in the availability, purchase or rental of housing. A Hearing Committee will make a decision on the complaint, which may be appealed to the Illinois Association of Realtors and, if necessary, to HUD.

As of 2000, state law requires all Realtors to take a mandatory core curriculum including a 3-hour course in fair housing every two years in order to receive their license. This is taught by home study or a course offered locally. Further, the DAR continues to emphasize fair housing through representation on the Fair Housing Committee and contact with the Human Rights Officer, who made an educational presentation to them in June 2009.

However, "hearsay evidence" suggests that incidences of racial steering still occur. This may partly be because not all local real estate sales are conducted by licensed Realtors. The Fair Housing Committee will continue to work closely with the DAR, and will reach out to other real estate agents to increase awareness and monitor any reports of racial steering.

***9. Some landlords are unwilling to rent to people who are Section 8 eligible, or who are Social Security or SSDI recipients.***

*Actions:* Illinois state legislation now prevents mortgage banks and other financial institutions from discrimination based on their lawful source of income. However, efforts to pass a State bill to extend this requirement to landlords have so far been unsuccessful.

**10. Renters may be unaware of their fair housing and tenants' rights.**

*Actions:* The City of Decatur's Fair Housing Committee has held workshops and distributed informational booklets. There is currently no organization specifically designated to handle landlord-tenant disputes or answer questions regarding tenant rights (other than those specifically on fair housing issues, which would be handled by the City's Human Rights Officer). This continues to be a priority. The City of Decatur currently has funding designated for a tenant counseling program through its CDBG allocation.

**11. Many multi-family structures are not ADA accessible units.**

*Actions:* All new multi-family developments in the City are now required to follow ADA, increasing the number of accessible/visitable/adaptable units. The City's residential accessibility program and other community programs continue to assist in providing accessibility improvements to existing homes, which should help increase the number of accessible units.

**12. Persons with hearing disabilities may not have access to public meetings, including those related to housing and community development, or to fair housing information.**

*Actions:* The City will provide sign language at meetings if requested.

**13. Decatur's Hispanic population may not be aware of their fair housing rights.**

*Actions:* HUD has fair housing information available in Spanish and other languages for persons with limited English proficiency, including its "Equal Opportunity for All" and "Are You a Victim of Housing Discrimination" brochures. The City will make these materials available on request. Further, the City has a Citizen Participation Plan as part of its Consolidated Plan which includes the following clause:

*If it is anticipated that at least five (5) non-English speaking residents will attend a public hearing, the City will make its best effort to have a translator available at the hearing or to have a summary of the document translated. If the hearing is held in, or funding proposed to be used in, a neighborhood where at least ten percent (10%) of the residents speak and read a primary language other than English, then all notices of the public hearing and a summary of basic proposal components will be produced in such language.*

## **H. Monitoring**

The City of Decatur is committed to compliance with all federal regulations by an on-going system of monitoring all ARRA, CDBG- and HOME-funded activities. This compliance will apply to the City of Decatur and any sub recipient, developer, and CHDO. Neighborhood Outreach staff conducts two types of program/project monitoring: desk monitoring and on-site monitoring.

Desk monitoring is an ongoing process of reviewing the City's program performance and the performance of sub recipients, CHDOs, and developers. The city has designed sub recipient and CHDO manuals as well as program manuals for the homeowner occupied programs. Copies of the manuals are provided to the sub recipients, CHDOs, and developers. As an additional monitoring tool, monitoring checklists are used for the various programs and projects. The monitoring checklists are modeled after the HUD monitoring checklists for CDBG- and HOME-funded programs. The following information is reviewed and analyzed in conjunction with the applicable HUD regulations:

- Applications and supporting documentation
- Agreements and contracts
- Environmental and historical reviews
- Drawdown request for reimbursements
- Budget and any revisions if applicable
- Citizen complaints
- Litigation issues
- Financial statements and auditor reports
- Monthly reports
- Payrolls (when applicable)

This information is used to observe the strengths and weakness of programs or the lack of activity or inappropriate changes in the city program/ sub recipient/CHDO/developer projects or activities. The information is a tool to identify problems or potential problems that hinder the accomplishment of projects. Analysis of sub recipient data may indicate a need for special monitoring visits by city staff to resolve or prevent further problems.

City staff conducts periodic on-site monitoring of all sub recipients, CHDOs, and developers. An on-site visit is conducted at least once during the duration of the program and at project close-out. Additional on-site visits are conducted as needed and if findings in the initial visit deem it necessary.

On-going internal reviews of city programs are conducted by the Neighborhood Outreach staff. Each activity is reviewed under the following categories:

- Application completeness/applicant eligibility review (prior to funding)
- Grant/regulatory agreement (containing all Federal, State and Local compliance requirements including the recording of documents when applicable)
- Conflict of Interest
- Local recordkeeping requirements
- Review of drawdown of funds (original source documentation/reasonableness of costs)
- Real Property acquisition
- Review of operations/maintenance, essential services, and homeless prevention services costs
- Relocation (URA and Section 104(d))
- Labor standards (wage decisions/payroll reviews/employee interviews)
- Housing rehabilitation (program guidelines, housing quality standards, work write-ups/cost estimates, inspections)
- New housing construction (property standards/inspections/reasonableness of costs)
- Tenant-based rental assistance
- Beneficiaries-income eligibility reviews
- Fair Housing/EEO-including affirmative marketing
- Section 3 opportunities
- Closeout report (review)
- Financial and compliance audits
- Timeliness of project completion
- Subsidy layering

### **1. Meeting Goals and Objectives**

The City of Decatur recognizes the need to monitor its accomplishment of goals and objectives as outlined in the Annual Action Plan. All sub recipients, CHDOs, and developers are required to submit monthly reports of their accomplishments. These figures are collected, compiled into cumulative spreadsheet, and reported annually in the CAPER. Figures on accomplishments of in-house CDBG- and HOME-funded programs (homebuyer, housing rehabilitation, etc.) are also collected, compiled, reported in the CAPER. It is the goal of the City of Decatur to update and maintain the various phases of each project on the IDIS system on a regular basis.

### **2. Performance Goals and Monitoring**

The City of Decatur uses a Performance Measurement System for its CDBG- and HOME-funded activities. This system assists the City in assessing the productivity and impact of programs on

which federal resources are expended. The performance measures for each specific objective are included in the narrative for each objective and in Table 2C, Section V, and Table 3A, Section VII of this document.

The City continues to expand and refine the use of the performance measuring system and report on this in the self-evaluation section of the annual CAPER.

Following are examples of performance measurements:

- To address the issue of improving housing conditions for low-income homeowners, the City and subrecipients will provide opportunities for low income homeowners to rehabilitate the housing. The rehabilitation will address accessibility, code compliance, incipient codes, improve secure, and potentially improve energy conservation. The long term objective is to assist 45 units over the next five years. The positive outcome is includes but is not limited to: safe, sanitary, accessible, and affordable housing units for low/mod homeowners. This will provide an avenue for homeowners to stay in their home, preserve the housing stock, stabilize neighborhoods, improve energy efficiency, assist with crime prevention, and preserve the property value for the homeowner.
- An objective to address ownership opportunities for low income households will be addressed through affordable homeownership programs with the City, local financial institutions, and the CHDOs. The result will be improved quality of life, stabilization of neighborhoods through homeownership. The five year goal will be to provide 25 units to low income households. In addition financial assistance, the household will receive counseling and/or education. The counseling/education will provide information to households to evaluate opportunities. The goal is to make the right choice and improve their quality of living.
- Another effort, to preserve and stabilize neighborhoods, will be to provide code enforcement in neighborhoods. At the same time, structures which are unsafe will be identified. Action will be taken to demolish those unsafe structures. Over the next five years, approximately 100 structures will be demolished. The goal is to improve the attractiveness of the neighborhoods and provide a safe environment for the residents of the neighborhood.

The City has also approved guidelines for resale or recapture of funds during the affordability period for HOME-assisted homeownership housing. In general, the City will use **recapture** rather than **resale provisions** whenever this is possible (i.e., in any case where there is a direct subsidy to the homebuyer). Resale provisions will be used when there is a development subsidy

only, with no direct subsidy to the homebuyer. However, it is possible that a case might arise where the resale provisions would be used instead even if the recapture provisions would be permitted. If this were to occur, this determination would be made prior to closing with the homebuyer and documented in the project file.

**Recapture/resale provisions** are triggered when a homebuyer fails to live in the HOME-assisted property for the full length of the affordability period (5, 10, or 15 years). The four events that trigger these provisions are included in the Homebuyer Agreement and Installment Note attached to the mortgage on each HOME-assisted homebuyer property.

The length of the **affordability period** is either five (5), ten (10), or fifteen (15) years depending on the amount of HOME subsidy provided directly to the homebuyer. This subsidy is usually in the form of either downpayment assistance or a reduction in the cost of the property below its appraised market value. This assistance is usually less than \$15,000, so the affordability period is usually five (5) years. The affordability period is calculated starting from the date of closing and occupancy for the HOME-assisted property.

City staff ensures that the resale/recapture provisions are enforced through annual monitoring of all HOME-assisted homeownership projects. Each homeowner is sent a letter which they must sign and return, certifying that they still occupy the HOME-assisted property. CHDO's are monitored annually to ensure that they are monitoring their homeownership projects in a similar manner.

The homebuyer's mortgage with the City includes a clause which outlines what occurs if the recapture provisions are triggered. The clause states that the HOME funds are immediately due and payable to the City, in an amount based on the sharing of net proceeds of the sale of the property. The City of Decatur and its CHDO's in homebuyer programs are to base the recapture amount on the net proceeds available from sale rather than from the entire amount of the HOME investment, as required by HOME regulations.

If a homebuyer fails to comply with the affordability requirements but does not sell the property (e.g., moves elsewhere but does not sell the home), the City would pursue legal action against the homeowner. The owner would be required to pay all legal expenses, as stated in the Mortgage and Installment Note.

If a determination is made to use the **resale** rather than the recapture provisions (or if only a development subsidy is provided, so that the resale provisions are required), provisions would be included in the deed restriction or lien on the property stating that if the property was sold during the affordability period the new purchaser must meet the HOME definition of low-income and occupy the property as the family's principal residence. Also, the sales price must be affordable

to the new purchaser. "Affordable" will be defined as no more than 30% of the purchaser's income may be used to pay the fixed costs of owning a home.

Any funds which are recaptured as a result of a homebuyer property being sold within the affordability period would be returned to the City and treated as program income; that is, they would be used only for other HOME-eligible projects. No recaptured funds would be used for planning or administrative costs.

### **3. On-site Property Inspections**

To ensure each housing unit assisted under the Rental Rehabilitation Program continues to meet minimum property code requirements, City staff (Rehabilitation Construction Specialist) conducts an on-site inspection of the assisted properties annually to the 2006 International Code. If any code concerns and/or violations are present during the onsite inspection, the property owner is provided a detailed inspection report listing all required repairs. The owner is given reasonable time to address all necessary repair work as noted in the report. Once repairs have been made, city staff conducts a follow-up inspection verifying work completed. This inspection process is ongoing until the loan provided is paid in full or forgiven in its entirety.

To ensure each housing unit assisted under the Decatur Homebuyer Program, the City staff (Rehabilitation Construction Specialist) conducts an on-site inspection of the potential homebuyer properties. The Rehabilitation Construction Specialist completes the Section 8 Housing Quality Standards Checklist (HQS). If any code concerns are found, the checklist identifies the issues. A copy is provided to seller and a copy is retained for the file.

City staff continues to stay abreast of Building Occupancy Code and Housing Quality Standard requirements to remain compliant with the City of Decatur's local building codes (2006 International Code) and federal requirements as it relates to decent, safe and sanitary housing.

### **4. HOME Program Monitoring Process**

The City's adopted a Monitoring Plan for HOME-Funded Activities establishes procedures for both desk and on-site monitoring of all homebuyer and rental projects, whether conducted by the City, its CHDOs, or other agencies. It also establishes on-going monitoring responsibilities, particularly for rental projects and lease to purchase projects. A copy of the HOME monitoring plan is available at the Economic and Urban Development Department.

**CHDOs:** According to the HOME Monitoring Plan, each CHDO is monitored at least annually through a desk and on-site review. In addition, each project is monitored to confirm matching funds and to determine compliance with maximum per unit subsidies, maximum mortgage limits, income eligibility of the beneficiary, and code compliance. CHDOs are required to submit

documentation prior to each project closing to certify that resale or recapture provisions have been determined, the correct affordability period has been established, and that the proper corresponding lien and deed restriction has been attached to the sale of the property. CHDOs may allow forgiveness of the HOME homebuyer subsidy over the term of the affordability period if this is so stated in the lien/mortgage and agreement.

**Homebuyer Program:** The Homebuyer Program is also monitored to ensure that the recapture provisions have been included and the appropriate affordability period established. The recapture clause is included in all mortgages under the Homebuyer program and is explained to the homebuyer prior to and at closing.

**Net Proceeds:** Mortgage documents used by the City of Decatur and its CHDOs in homebuyer programs base the recapture amount on the net proceeds available from sale rather than from the entire amount of the HOME investment, as required by HOME regulations.

**Long-Term Affordability Provisions:** The City of Decatur has established long-term affordability provisions for all HOME-funded homebuyer and rental assistance programs as follows:

1. Homebuyer Programs: HOME funds will be used to assist low-income homebuyers through various programs, both in-house and through subrecipient agencies. For each program, guidelines will be established as to the appropriate affordability period (dependent on the amount of HOME assistance provided) and the resale or recapture provisions which will be used. This determination will be made prior to closing with the homebuyer, and will be included in the Subsidy Agreement and Note, which is recorded as part of the mortgage on the property. The affordability period and recapture provisions will be explained to the homebuyer prior to and at closing. The homes will be monitored annually throughout the affordability period to ensure that the purchaser is still using the home as their primary residence.
2. CHDOs: For each house that the CHDO rehabilitates or constructs for sale to a qualified, income-eligible household, the CHDO is required to determine the appropriate affordability period (dependent on the amount of HOME assistance provided) and the option that will be applied at closing with the homebuyer. The options available under the HOME program are resale within the period of affordability to another low/moderate income buyer or recapture of funds in whole or prorated down based on the number of years in occupancy. This determination must be made prior to closing with the homebuyer, and must be included in the Subsidy Agreement and Note, which is recorded as part of the mortgage on the property. At project close-out (sale of the property to a qualified, eligible household), the CHDO submits to the City documentation of its

resale/recapture determination and a copy of the lien/deed restrictions. CHDOs may allow forgiveness of the HOME subsidy over the term of the affordability period if this is included in the lien/mortgage and agreement.

3. Rehabilitation Programs: Although HOME regulations do not require an affordability period for HOME-funded owner-occupant rehabilitation, the City of Decatur has established a policy that a minimum 2-year affordability period will apply. This is recorded in the Subsidy Agreement and Note, which is recorded as part of the mortgage on the property.

4. Rental: All HOME-assisted rental projects (supportive housing, etc.) will continue to be monitored to ensure compliance throughout the affordability period with allowable income and rent levels (annual re-certification) and property standards (every one, two or three years depending on the number of units in the project). The length of the affordability period is dependent upon whether the project is new construction or rehabilitation, and the number of units. A spreadsheet tracks all rental projects and monitoring dates.

5. Lease-purchase: HOME funds may be used to assist homebuyers through lease-purchase programs for existing housing and for housing to be constructed. The housing must be purchased by a homebuyer within 36 months of signing the lease' purchase agreement. The homebuyer must qualify as a low-income family at the time the lease-purchase agreement is signed. If HOME funds are used to acquire housing that will be resold to a homebuyer through a lease-purchase program, the HOME affordability requirements for rental housing (see 92.252) shall apply if the housing is not transferred to a homebuyer within forty-two months after project completion. Lease-purchase projects will be tracked through a spreadsheet to ensure compliance.

**SECTION VII**  
**FISCAL YEAR 2010**  
**ANNUAL ACTION PLAN**

## SECTION VII: FISCAL YEAR 2010 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

### A. Executive Summary

This section of the FY2010-14 Consolidated Plan presents the **Fiscal Year 2010 Annual Action Plan**. The Action Plan provides a concise summary of the actions, activities, and programs that will take place during the next year to address the priority needs and specific objectives identified by the strategic plan. The Action Plan identifies the linkage between the use of federal resources and the specific objectives developed to address priority needs identified in the strategic plan.

For the 2010 program year, the City expects to receive \$1,532,700 in CDBG funding and \$578,960 in HOME funding to support activities which benefit very low, low, and moderate-income persons. These grants will be used in conjunction with program income, carryover funds, and other funding sources to complete programs and projects to further the goals and objectives of the Consolidated Plan.

The Action Plan begins with **Form SF 424, Application for Federal Assistance** (included in *Appendix E*), and then states the way in which it intends to meet the HOME match requirements. It then presents the City's strategy for use of its anticipated entitlement funding allocation during FY2010, in conjunction with other sources, to meet the objectives outlined in the Consolidated Plan for housing, homelessness, special needs, public services, economic development, infrastructure, and neighborhood revitalization. This information is presented in both table and narrative form. Finally, it states the manner in which the City intends to address other areas covered in the Consolidated Plan including barriers to affordable housing, our anti-poverty strategy, coordination of resources, program monitoring, and other areas. *Appendix F* of this document is **Table 3C, the Consolidated Plan Listing of Projects**. The required *Certification Forms* are included in *Appendix E*. The *citizen participation process* for the annual action Plan is the same as that for the Consolidated Plan, and is presented in *Appendix B*.

In FY2010, the City proposes to address its objectives through programs that: assist low income families with housing rehabilitation and increased energy efficiency, assist the disabled with improved access and mobility; provide emergency repairs to enable families to remain in their homes, provide downpayment assistance to first-time homebuyers, improve the living environment through housing code enforcement and demolition, provide expanded educational and job training opportunities, initiate a tenant counseling program, and assist low-income renters to sustain housing and prevent homelessness. The expected outcomes will provide decent, safe, and affordable housing, improve the quality of the living environment, and increase economic opportunity.

## **B. Application for Federal Assistance and Certifications**

See Form 424, included in *Appendix E*, for the City of Decatur's application for FY2010 CDBG and HOME funds. Also included in *Appendix E* are the required Certifications (general, specific CDBG, and specific HOME certifications).

## **C. HOME Match Requirements**

HOME Match requirements will be met in FY2010 through various means including the following:

- Carryover of excess match from prior years (carryover as of May 2009 was \$4,178,371)
- Donation of land and real property from individuals, foundations and institutions. This is a regular source of match for CHDO projects
- Non-federal funding sources (e.g. private bank loans, Federal Home Loan Bank funds, IHDA Trust Fund) used in various projects such as the Homebuyer Program, supportive housing, and new housing development
- Building materials, labor and equipment are often donated by private sources for various projects such as housing rehabilitation, CHDO projects, and CPTED

## **D. Specific Annual Objectives and Proposed Accomplishments**

During FY2010, the City of Decatur will address a number (but not all) of the priorities and objectives identified in the FY2010-14 Consolidated Plan. Following is a list of the City's housing, special needs, homeless, and community development objectives and the projects/programs which are proposed to address that objective in FY2010, including the anticipated outcome and the annual affordable housing completion goals. **Table 3A** (on the following page) presents this information for FY2010 in the same way in which it is presented in *Table 2C* in *Section V* of the Consolidated Plan. **Table 3C**, included as *Appendix F*, lists each specific project and its funding source, performance indicator, and objective/outcome category.

### **1. Rental Housing Objectives**

**Objective RH-1: Provide housing counseling services to low income renter and/or homeowner households.**

*Actions Proposed to Address this Objective:*

\$20,000 CDBG carryover funds to establish a Renter/Homebuyer Counseling Program to improve housing for low-income renters. This program is anticipated to begin later in FY10 and begin to show more results the following year. These funds may also be used for Homebuyer Counseling, OH-2.

*Other Funding Resources:* HUD Counseling program funds, private sources

Anticipated Results: 10 persons served

**Objective RH-2: Provide additional affordable rental housing opportunities to meet a specific need.**

Actions Proposed to Address this Objective: None anticipated in FY2010.

**Objective RH-3: Continue assisting low-income renters to sustain housing and prevent homelessness.**

Actions Proposed to Address this Objective: In 2009, the City of Decatur received \$622,144 through the federal **Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (HPRP)**. These funds were allocated to Dove, Inc. to provide short-term, emergency assistance to low-income households (under 50% MFI) for rent and utility assistance. The program serves eligible persons who would become homeless if not for the HPRP assistance (Prevention) or who are currently homeless (Rapid Rehousing). The City will continue administering the 2009 HPRP until funds are expended, and will seek to obtain future funds if the program is renewed.

Other Funding Resources: 2009 HPRP

Anticipated Results: 240 households/415 persons served

**2. Owner Housing Objectives**

**OH-1: Improve existing housing conditions for low-income homeowners, especially seniors and people with disabilities so they can continue to live independently.**

Actions Proposed to Address this Objective:

1. Homeowner Housing Rehabilitation Program: \$408,535 in FY10 HOME funds to provide home rehabilitation assistance to low-income homeowners, to bring structures in targeted area up to health and safety code standards, plus \$743,280 in carry over funds to provide home rehabilitation to low-moderate income homeowners in a targeted area, not necessarily bring units completely up to health and safety code standards.
2. Roof Program: \$100,000 in FY10 CDBG funds, along with \$100,000 in carryover to address code violations on roofs and porches for low-income households city-wide. May also mitigate lead paint hazards and address emergency and accessibility needs. City-wide program.
3. Emergency Program: \$50,000 in FY10 CDBG, plus \$7500 in carry over funds to assist low-moderate income homeowners with emergency repairs to their homes (such as a new furnace). City-wide program.
4. Residential Accessibility Program: \$30,000 in FY10 CDBG funds to provide accessibility improvements (such as ramps, and accessibility improvements) to low-moderate income homeowners with physical disabilities. City-wide program.
5. CPTED: \$30,000 in carryover funds to provide safety improvements to low-income homeowners. City-wide program.

6. Energy Conservation Program: \$160,000 FY10 CDBG funds and \$170,000 carryover to provide energy conservation improvements to low income homeowners (such as storm windows, insulation, furnaces, water heaters, storm windows, etc.) citywide. May also mitigate lead paint hazards and address emergency and accessibility needs. City-wide program.

Anticipated Results:

1. 19 Housing units in FY10 (av. \$60,000/unit) for Residential Rehabilitation
2. 10 housing units in FY10 (av. \$20,000/unit) for Roof
3. 12 housing units in FY10 (av. \$5000/unit) for Emergency
4. 10 housing units in FY10 (av. \$6,000/unit) for Accessibility
5. 5 housing units in FY10 (av. \$6,000/unit) for CPTED
6. 11 housing units in FY10 (av. \$30,000/unit) for Energy Conservation

**OH-2: Provide financial assistance to low-moderate income first time homebuyers.**

Actions Proposed to Address this Objective:

1. The Decatur First-time Homebuyer Program: \$90,000 in carry-over HOME funds to provide down payment assistance to low-income, first-time homebuyers. Continuation of existing City-wide program.

Other Funding Resources: Private, FHLB, IHDA

Anticipated Results: 5 households assisted in FY10 (av. \$14,000/household).

2. \$20,000 in carryover funds to establish a Tenant/Homebuyer Counseling Program to improve housing for low-income renters/homebuyers. This program is anticipated to begin later in FY10 and begin to more show results the following year. These funds may also be used for Renter Counseling RH-1 (see RH-1).

Other Funding Resources: HUD Counseling program funds, CICD, CIDMCE, private sources

Anticipated Results: 10 persons served (RH-1)

**OH-3: Provide new ownership opportunities for low-income households.**

Actions Proposed to Address this Objective:

1. CHDO projects: \$90,000 in FY10 HOME funds plus \$144,117 in carryover funds for CHDO set-aside projects which may include new or substantially rehabilitated housing for low-income homebuyers or renters. Number of units and type of assistance will depend on CHDO proposals. The CHDO's will have available in \$22,500 in carryover from CHDO operating funds. The CHDO operating funds will assist with increased administrative costs.

Other Funding Resources: Private, IHDA, FHLB

Anticipated Results: 3 Housing Units (av. \$40,000/unit)

### **3. Homeless Objectives**

#### **HL-1: Continue to coordinate with homeless service providers and other organizations to educate the public about homelessness.**

##### **Actions Proposed to Address this Objective:**

Staff time (approx. 4 hours/mo.) in support of Homeless Council activities, along with the continued updating and monitoring of the Ten Year Chronic Homelessness Plan.

**Other Funding Resources:** HUD supportive services funds, private, Dove, CICD, DMCOC, DHA, Heritage Behavioral and Chronic Homeless Working group

#### **HL-2: Continue to support the Homeward Bound transitional housing program.**

##### **Actions Proposed to Address this Objective:**

Administrative funds (approx. \$1200/year in HOME funds) and staff time (approx. 4 hours/mo.) in support of the Homeward Bound Partnership activities and the Homeward Bound Review Committee.

**Other Funding Resources:** HUD supportive services funds, private, Dove, CICD, DMCOC, DHA, Heritage Behavioral

#### **HL-3: Continue to administer the 2009 HPRP grant and pursue renewed funding if available.**

**Actions Proposed to Address this Objective:** See Objective RH-3. Staff time (approx. 4 hours/wk) to administer and monitor the 2009 HPRP grant.

**Other Funding Resources:** HUD supportive services funds, Dove, state funding (DHS)

**Anticipated Results:** 240 households/415 persons served

#### **HL-3: Support efforts to increase the number of emergency, transitional, and permanent beds and units for homeless individuals and families for which no or limited housing is currently available.**

**Actions Proposed to Address this Objective:** None anticipated in FY2010.

### **4. Special Needs Objectives**

#### **SN-1: Support additional affordable housing opportunities for identified special need population groups**

**Actions Proposed to Address this Objective:** None anticipated in FY2010.

### **5. Community Development Objectives**

#### **CD-1: Continue and increase code enforcement on abandoned, unsafe and substandard structures.**

**Actions Proposed to Address this Objective:**

\$160,000 in FY10 CDBG funds and \$55,000 in carryover funds for Neighborhood Standards Officers to enforce housing, zoning, and property standards in low-moderate income neighborhoods to improve the safety and quality of life in neighborhoods.

Other Funding Resources: Public funds

Anticipated Results: Average 300 - 400 housing cases processed/year

**CD-2: Continue and increase demolition of abandoned, unsafe and substandard structures.**

Actions Proposed to Address this Objective:

\$300,000 in FY10 CDBG funds to continue to demolish unsafe or substandard homes throughout the City.

Other Funding Resources: n/a

Anticipated Results: 20 units in FY10

**6. Infrastructure Objectives**

**I-1: Continue to improve infrastructure in low income neighborhoods by replacement or repair**

Actions Proposed to Address this Objective:

The City of Decatur received \$407,376 in FY09 CDBG-R funds through the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) CDBG-R's as part of the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA)*. These funds will be used for the installation of ADA sidewalk ramps in CDBG-eligible neighborhoods to improve accessibility for persons with physical disabilities. The City will continue administering the 2009 CDBG-R funds until funds are expended, and will seek to obtain future funds if the program is renewed.

Other Funding Resources: CDBG-R

Anticipated Results: 10 Blocks assisted in FY10

**7. Public Facilities Objectives**

**PF-1: Support the development and/or rehabilitation of public facilities which address an identified community need**

Actions Proposed to Address this Objective: None anticipated in FY2010.

**8. Public Services Objectives**

**PS-1: Collaborate with vocational, business and other organizations to provide new/expanded educational and job training opportunities for low income residents.**

Actions Proposed to Address this Objective:

\$100,000 in CDBG carryover funds to assist with job training activities.

Other Funding Resources: Private, local, other federal and state

Anticipated Results: 12 persons served

## **9. Economic Development Objectives**

### **ED-1: Support the sustainability of the Wabash Crossing Development**

#### **Actions Proposed to Address this Objective:**

\$277,000 in FY10 CDBG funds will continue to be used for repayment of a Section 108 loan which provided infrastructure in support of the Wabash Crossing new affordable housing development.

**Other Funding Resources:** Local funds

### **ED-2: Proactively identify and pursue cleanup and reuse of functionally obsolete and vacant properties**

**Actions Proposed to Address this Objective:** None anticipated in FY2010.

### **ED-3: Rehabilitate and restore historic buildings and facades**

#### **Actions Proposed to Address this Objective:**

\$65,000 in carryover CDBG funds to provide matching assistance to business owners in restoring their exterior facade to preserve and/or recreate its historic features.

**Other Funding Resources:** Private funds

**Anticipated Results:** 1 Historic structure restored

## **10. Neighborhood Revitalization Objectives**

### **NR-1: Continue support of the Coalition of Neighborhood Organizations (CONO)**

#### **Actions Proposed to Address this Objective:**

\$10,000 in FY10 CDBG funds and \$9,000 in carryover CDBG funds for administrative costs to continue CONO's outreach efforts. The funds will be available for neighborhood grants and assistance with training of neighborhood leaders at the Regional Neighborhood Network Conference.

**Other Funding Resources:** n/a

**Anticipated Results:** 5@ \$1,000 Neighborhood organizations assisted

### **NR-2: Support crime prevention activities within the Neighborhood Regeneration Area**

**Actions Proposed to Address this Objective:** None anticipated in FY2010.

## **E. Geographic Distribution**

Many of the programs and activities proposed in this Action Plan will be available throughout the City of Decatur's corporate limits. This includes projects which address emergency housing needs, roof rehabilitation, needs for accessibility improvements for low to moderate-income households, energy conservation improvements, security, and other housing rehabilitation needs.

However, as discussed in *Section VI, Part A* of this document, the underlying theme of Decatur's 2010-14 Consolidated Plan is ***Neighborhood Regeneration***. The majority of programs and strategies described in this Plan are designed to improve the quality of life for residents of the oldest, core area of Decatur through a locally designated **Neighborhood Regeneration Area**. Please refer to *Section VI. A* for the City's strategy for the Neighborhood Regeneration Area, and to *Appendix C* for a map of the area.

## **F. Homeless and Other Special Populations**

Please refer to *Section III, Part D of the Consolidated Plan* for the City's strategy to address homelessness, and to *Section V, parts B and C*, for the City's specific homeless and special needs objectives. *Part D, 3 and 4* of this section describe the Specific Annual Objectives and Proposed Accomplishments anticipated to be undertaken in 2010 to address the needs of homeless individuals and families, persons at risk of homelessness, and the special needs population. These programs include:

- *Administering a Residential Accessibility Program* to assist persons with physical disabilities to remain in their homes.
- *Providing staff and financial support to the Decatur/Macon County Homeless Council and the Homeward Bound Partners* transitional housing program.
- *Continuing to administer the 2009 HPRP grant* through Dove, Inc. to prevent homelessness.
- *Initiating a tenant counseling program* to assist low-income renters who otherwise may be at risk of homelessness.
- *Continuing taking a leadership role on the Working Group on Chronic Homelessness* to fulfill the recommendations presented in the **Ten Year Plan to Address Chronic Homelessness**.
- *Working closely with, and supporting the activities of, other organizations which focus on the needs of the homeless and special needs populations*, including efforts to secure funding for additional leased units, Shelter Plus Care vouchers, or new facilities for permanent supportive housing to meet specific unmet homeless or special population needs.

## **G. Needs of Public Housing**

In its PHA 5-Year Plan for 2010-14, the Decatur Housing Authority states its mission as "To provide and maintain quality affordable housing with access to community resources for low to moderate income families and individuals." The City's strategy to assist the DHA in meeting its goals is outlined in *Section VI. B* of this document.

During FY2010, the City of Decatur will help address the needs of public housing and its residents by:

- ***Supporting the DHA's objectives to build or acquire additional housing units and vouchers*** by working with DHA to facilitate land acquisition, building permits, and construction of additional public housing units.
- ***Assisting DHA residents in attaining homeownership*** by encouraging DHA residents to apply for the Homebuyer Program and other homeownership assistance programs provided by private lenders, and by supporting existing and additional pre- and post-home purchase counseling programs for DHA residents, such as those currently provided by CICD and CIDMCE.
- ***Continuing to support and work with programs that encourage resident self-sufficiency, management and employment opportunities*** by ensuring that DHA residents are given priority in any tenant counseling and employment and training programs assisted by CDBG funding. If requested, City staff will continue coordinate with self-sufficiency programs by serving on committees, attending meetings, etc.
- ***Working closely with DHA to facilitate construction of a retail center within Wabash Crossing*** to promote an improved living environment and increased economic opportunity for DHA residents.

## **H. Barriers to Affordable Housing**

Please refer to ***Section VI. C*** of this document for a discussion of the ways in which the City of Decatur is pursuing policies which reduce barriers to the development of affordable housing within its jurisdiction. No revisions to this strategy are anticipated during FY2010.

## **I. Anti-Poverty Strategy**

As discussed in ***Section VI. E*** of the Consolidated Plan, the City of Decatur is committed to reducing the number of families in poverty. The City works towards reducing poverty by providing low-income persons and families with programs that improve their housing, provide a more suitable living environment, and that motivate and help them move toward full self-sufficiency. The City of Decatur works closely with various public service providers and other units of local government to provide low income families with supportive services.

During FY2010, it is anticipated that the City will continue to partner with various social service agencies and address the goal of reducing poverty in the community. The City's strategy will include:

- *Initiating a tenant counseling program* to assist low-income renters to maintain decent housing.
- *Administering the federal Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program (HPRP)*, which was allocated to Dove, Inc., to provide short-term, emergency assistance to low-income households who are at risk of homelessness.
- *Providing financial assistance to low-income persons and families to achieve homeownership*, thereby improving their financial condition and increasing stability. These homebuyers are required to receive homeownership counseling to HUD-certified Homeownership Counseling agencies.
- *Providing infrastructure improvements to some of Decatur's lowest income neighborhoods through the CDBG-R program*, improving the quality of life for its residents.
- *Working with the Decatur/Macon County Homeless Council* to address the needs of the lowest income population.
- *Continuing programs to improve housing conditions for low income residents and the quality of housing in low income neighborhoods*, including housing rehabilitation, energy efficiency, residential accessibility, and home security.
- *Utilizing CDBG funds to collaborate with vocational, business and other organizations* to provide new expanded educational and job training opportunities for low income residents.
- *Supporting efforts to re-apply for a "Pathways Out of Poverty" grant through the U.S. Department of Labor* to retrain workers for emerging jobs in green industries.
- *Supporting programs to assist public housing residents* to improve their quality of life and economic condition.
- *Ensuring that any programs the City initiates or participates in to address poverty are in line with goals established by agencies for which this is a primary mission*, such as the Decatur-Macon County Opportunities Corporation (DMCOC), the United Way of Decatur and Mid-Illinois, and the Human Services Area Consortium (HSAC).

## **J. Lead Based Paint Hazards**

As discussed in *Section II* of this document, due to the age and condition of housing in Decatur, especially in the urban core neighborhoods, exposure to the harmful effects of lead-based paint is an issue which must be addressed. The need for continued lead screenings, lead mitigation and abatement work in Decatur remains an important health/environmental issue. *Section VI. D* outlines the City's strategy to address lead paint hazards, as required of all jurisdictions that receive funding from the CDBG program, HOME program, and other CPD programs. In 2010, the City of Decatur will continue to comply with lead-based paint regulations in the following manner:

- *The City will continue to reduce the exposure to lead-based paint hazards in housing units through all its federally-funded housing programs*, thereby improving the quality of the existing housing stock and providing a safer environment for low-income residents. All units rehabilitated through federally-funded rehabilitation programs, including those rehabilitated by a CHDO, must pass a lead clearance inspection upon completion of the work. Identified lead hazards in units assisted by other federally funded programs, such as the Homebuyer Program, will also be addressed in accordance with regulations.
- *The Neighborhood Redevelopment Department will ensure that staff understands and complies with HUD's lead-based paint regulations.* Staff members will attend HUD's Lead-Based Paint Training refresher courses if offered.
- *The City will continue to provide methods and assemble materials to educate rental property owners, homeowners, and occupants of rental housing about the lead-based paint requirements.*
- *The City will continue to nurture the existing relationships and establish new contacts with lead professionals and key partners*, such as risk assessors and clearance technicians, public health departments, and HUD lead grantees.
- *In cooperation with the Macon County Health Department, the City will complete the current "Get The Lead Out" grant provided by the Illinois Department of Public Health.*
- *The City will continue to work with the Macon County Health Department (MCHD) for provision of lead-based paint risk assessments and clearance tests on the City's federally-funded housing rehabilitation and homebuyer programs, and on addressing lead hazards in homes where children with elevated blood lead levels are identified.*

#### **K. Institutional Structure and Coordination of Resources**

Please refer to *Section I.* of the Consolidated Plan for a description of the institutional structure and organizations with which the City partners to carry out its housing and community development objectives, and to *Section VI. F* for the City's strategy for building institutional structure and enhancing coordination. In FY2010, the City intends to:

- *Partner with various housing and homeless service agencies by providing supportive services and staff support.* Staff will continue to take an active role with the Fair Housing Committee and the Decatur-Macon County Homeless Council.
- *Partner with homeless housing and service provider agencies on implementation of the City's Ten-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness.*

- *Fund eligible CHDOs and work closely with them on project development; and actively assist other housing organizations which seek to become CHDOs.*
- *Partner with Dove, Inc. to administer the HPRP program.*
- *Partner with local faith-based institutions, such as Dove, and outreach to additional faith-based organizations to coordinate assistance to the homeless and other population groups.*
- *Take an active role on the Decatur Fair Housing Committee to address impediments to fair housing.*
- *Take an active role on numerous committees and Boards to coordinate resources such as the Decatur Community Partnership, DCDF, CSAC, Homeward Bound, Decatur Area Education Coalition (DAEC), etc.*
- *Partner with private financial institutions to offer homebuyer assistance and promote downpayment assistance programs; work through CICD Welcome Home Program and CIDMCE to offer home buyer counseling services.*
- *Work closely with the DHA on completing and sustaining the Wabash Crossing development and other initiatives to assist public housing residents.*
- *Take an active role in neighborhood advocacy by working closely with CONO, including providing funds to CONO and supporting other neighborhood initiatives such as National Night Out and the Regional Neighborhood Network Conference.*
- *Continue to pursue additional funding opportunities to address the decent, safe, affordable, and accessible housing needs of residents and to address the elimination of slum and blight in our neighborhoods.*
- *Support the goals established by other community organizations to better the lives of Decatur residents, such as the United Way of Decatur and Mid-Illinois, the Macon County Mental Health Board, the Decatur Community Partnership, and the Community Foundation.*
- *Meet regularly with the Department of Planning to ensure coordination with local economic development initiatives, transportation plans, historic site preservation, Brownfield redevelopment, energy-efficiency initiatives, etc.; and with the Department of Engineering to coordinate implementation of the CDBG-R funds to provide sidewalk accessibility improvements in low-income neighborhoods.*

#### **L. Obstacles to Meeting Underserved Needs**

The Consolidated Plan identifies a number of housing and non-housing community development needs, and *Section V* outlines its priority needs and strategies to address them. Most of those needs are being addressed by the actions taken either by the City, public service agencies, or the private sector. However, there are always additional needs being identified or areas which are underserved by the current strategy. Some of the high priority community needs which were

identified include: educational and job training, employment opportunities, neighborhood programs, and needs of low-income renter households. While the City anticipates utilizing some of their federal entitlement to address these needs, insufficient funding at the federal and state level is often an obstacle.

During FY2010, the City will address the obstacles to meeting underserved needs by:

- *Supporting efforts of other agencies to secure funding to meet identified needs* such as applications to IHDA for funding for special needs housing, applications to HUD for additional Shelter Plus Care vouchers, Pathway Out of Poverty grants, Youthbuild, etc.
- *Utilizing a portion of its federal funds to help low-income households address emergency needs*, such as drainage problems, when funding for a longer-term or more extensive solution are not available
- *Providing funding for an employment training and education program* to assist in addressing Decatur's current unemployment problems
- *Working with DHA to facilitate development of additional public housing units and the Wabash Crossing retail center*
- *Continuing to take an active role on the Homeless Council, Homeward Bound partnership, and Working Group on Chronic Homelessness* to address the needs of the homeless
- *Addressing the needs of low-income renters* through initiation of a tenant counseling program, housing code enforcement, and fair housing activities. Some other strategies to assist low-income renters, such as through a rental housing rehabilitation program, rental housing inspections, or landlord licensing, remain controversial and are not anticipated at this time. Discussions are on-going.
- *Providing funding to preserve existing affordable housing stock in some cases where otherwise this would be economically unfeasible*, such as through HOME-funded housing rehabilitation.
- *Participating on various community boards and committees to identify and address underserved public service needs*, such as the Decatur Area Education Coalition, the Macon County Senior Coalition, The Decatur Community Partnership, the Macon County Mental Health Board's "Focus on the Future", and the United Way's *Survey of Unmet Community Needs*.

#### **M. Efforts to Foster and Maintain Affordable Housing**

Many of Decatur's FY2010 objectives will serve to foster and maintain affordable housing within the community. These efforts include:

- *Use of both CDBG and HOME funds to maintain and improve the existing affordable housing stock* through the Homeowner Housing Rehabilitation Program, Roof Program,

Emergency Program, Residential Accessibility Program, CPTED, and Energy Conservation Program

- *Use of CDBG funds to enforce housing codes in low-income neighborhoods*
- *Support efforts of DHA to increase the number of public housing units*
- *Provide HOME funds to Decatur's CHDO to use, in conjunction with other public/private resources, to provide new or substantially rehabilitated affordable housing units*
- *Work with the Decatur Fair Housing Committee to promote affordable housing opportunities and increase public awareness of housing issues.* An Affordable Housing Fair is set for May 1, 2010 at the Decatur Public Library.
- *Continue monitoring HOME-assisted housing units* to ensure continued affordability and compliance with housing quality standards

#### **N. Affirmative Marketing**

As required, the City of Decatur will ensure that all HOME-assisted projects of five (5) or more units are affirmatively marketed to all persons. All developers, nonprofits and CHDOs which receive HOME funds from the City are required to include an affirmative marketing plan in their project proposal. This plan must include methods for informing the public, owners and potential tenants about fair housing laws, a description of how they intend to affirmatively market the housing, and how they intend to inform any persons not likely to apply for housing without special outreach. Subrecipients and CHDOs are required to maintain records to document their affirmative marketing efforts and assess its effectiveness. These records and efforts will be assessed during project monitoring, and corrective actions will be taken if necessary.

#### **O. Minority/Women Outreach**

The City of Decatur will continue to recruit additional minority contractors, particularly for its rehabilitation projects. Efforts to attract minority and women-owned contractors to bid on HUD-funded projects will continue to expand in the coming year. Efforts will include:

- Additional advertising, perhaps in surrounding communities.
- Discuss/research techniques used in other cities to attract minority/women contractors.
- Contact prospective minority/women contractors via telephone or direct mail or website.
- Hold informational meetings for potential contractors with heavy outreach to minority/women contractors.

Staff is confident these efforts on the part of the City to become more inclusive will increase the number of minority/women participation of City contracts.

**P. Monitoring, HOME Affordability Requirements, and Property  
Inspections**

The City's monitoring process, performance goals, affordability guidelines, and resale/recapture provisions, and property inspection requirements are outlined in **Section VI. H.** of the Consolidated Plan. The City intends to adhere to this process for FY2010.

**Table 3A**  
**Summary of Specific Annual Objectives**

Obj #	Specific Objectives	Sources of Funds	Performance Indicators	Expected Number	Actual Number	Outcome/Objective *
	<b>Rental Housing</b>					
RH-1	Provide housing counseling services to low income renter households.	CDBG	Households	20		DH-3
RH-2	Provide additional affordable rental housing opportunities to meet a specific need.	HOME	Housing Units	0		DH-1
RH-3	Continue assisting low-income renters to sustain housing and prevent homelessness.	FY09 HPRP; N/A	N/A	N/A		DH-3
	<b>Owner Housing</b>					
OH-1	Improve existing housing conditions for low-income homeowners.	HOME/CDBG	Housing Units	67		DH-3
OH-2	Provide financial assistance to low income first-time homebuyers.	HOME	Households	5		DH-2
OH-3	Provide new home ownership opportunities for low income households	HOME	Housing Units	3		DH-1
	<b>Homelessness</b>					
HL-1	Continue to coordinate with homeless service providers and other organizations to educate the public about homelessness.	CDBG	Hours	48		DH-3
HL-2	Continue to support the Homeward Bound transitional housing program.	CDBG	Hours	48		DH-3
HL-3	Continue to administer the 2009 HPRP grant and pursue renewed funding if available.	CDBG	Hours	200		DH-3
HL-4	Support efforts to increase the number of emergency, transitional, and permanent beds and units for homeless individuals and families for which no or limited housing is currently available.	HOME/CDBG	Housing Units	0		DH-1
	<b>Special Needs</b>					

SN-1	Support additional affordable housing opportunities for identified special need population groups.	HOME/CDBG	Housing Units	0		DH-1
	<b>Community Development</b>					
CD-1	Continue code enforcement on abandoned, unsafe and substandard structures.	CDBG	Units	350		SL-3
CD-2	Continue demolition of abandoned, unsafe and substandard structures.	CDBG	Units	20		SL-3
	<b>Infrastructure</b>					
I-1	Continue to improve infrastructure in low income neighborhoods by replacement or repair.	FY09 CDBG-R	LMA	N/A		SL-3
	<b>Public Facilities</b>					
PF-1	Support the development and/or rehabilitation of public facilities which address an identified community need.	CDBG	Public Facilities	0		SL-3
	<b>Public Services</b>					
PS-1	Collaborate with vocational, business and other organizations to provide new/expanded educational and job training opportunities for low income residents.	CDBG	Persons	12		EO-1
	<b>Economic Development</b>					
ED-1	Support the sustainability of the Wabash Crossing development.	CDBG	N/A	N/A		EO-3
ED-2	Proactively identify and pursue clean-up and reuse of functionally obsolete and vacant properties.	CDBG	Businesses	0		EO-3
ED-3	Rehabilitate and restore historic buildings and facades.	CDBG	Businesses	1		EO-3
	<b>Neighborhood Revitalization</b>					
NR-1	Continue support of the Coalition of Neighborhood organizations (CONO).	CDBG	LMA	N/A		SL-3
NR-2	Support crime prevention activities within the Neighborhood	CDBG	LMA	0		SL-3

	Regeneration Area.					
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**\*Outcome/Objective Codes**

	Availability/Accessibility	Affordability	Sustainability
Decent Housing	DH-1	DH-2	DH-3
Suitable Living	SL-1	SL-2	SL-3
Economic Opportunity	EO-1	EO-2	EO-3